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Papers, Original and Selected.

GOD'S MODEL FOR WORKERS:

A HOMILY FOR 1867.

"Christ pleased not himself."—Rom. xv. 3.

The Christ-nature was of necessity twofold. Having two distinct, though not antagonistic works to perform, it is clear, from their diverse character, that the one could only be fulfilled by a God, and the other by a man. Thus, without his Godhead, the power of Christ would have been limited, and he would have had to win heaven for himself; and, without his manhood, he could neither have died on the accursed tree, nor have laboured as a missionary for God. It was as man, too, that he occupied the same platform as Adam unfallen; and thus, by the wondrous plan of uniting the man to the deity, a model was supplied by God for the imitation of mankind. A great sculptor, for example, first fashions a clay model so perfected in every part that his ideal is realized, and then carves the less pliant marble into the image he has thus created. So the Christ-model was fashioned perfect and entire, that man might so copy it as ultimately to become "a perfect man," and so reach "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13).

Now if every Christian needs a living model for hourly imitation, how much more do God's workmen require it? As nature's quarry cannot supply such a pattern, it must descend from heaven if it come at all. Happily, such a model we possess in "the *man* Christ Jesus." Nor are we chargeable with pride in thus placing the image of Jesus before us as our life-model, both as saints and as workers. For in Christ we see the model God

gave to man, or, in the words of the Holy Spirit, "He left us an example, that we should follow his steps" (1 Peter ii. 21). Jeremy Taylor well said, "Since our way is troublesome, obscure, and full of danger, apt to be mistaken and to affright our industry, the blessed Jesus commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood; and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath trodden down much of the difficulty, and made the way easier and fit for our feet."

In the Christ-model one dominant principle is observable, namely, self-abnegation. It was, so to speak, the Koh-i-noor of his earthly diadem. Some men, like Howard or Franké, have lived *partially* for their fellows, but Christ lived *wholly* for mankind. For of all born of woman, Christ was the only one that could say, "In me there is no taint of selfishness." And thus, if we scrutinize him within and without, we find that the portrait of Solomon is a true photograph of his character—"His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is *altogether* lovely" (Cant. v. 16). This is doubtless why the Holy Spirit, when speaking by his amanuensis Paul, gave this as the epitome of his character—"Christ pleased not himself." But if "he pleased not himself," did he please any one? and if so, whom did he please? Two points will show.

I. Christ pleased his Father.

1. *By a life of obedience.*

His inner life was ever subjected to the will of his Father. In his outer life he seemed to have based all his activities on one question—What will my Father think? Did Christ preach to one profligate women by Jacob's well a sermon which is for all time? He did it simply because it was the benign desire of his Father that every outcast should return and find rest in his bosom. Did he feed poor famished congregations in the heart of the wilderness? It was that he might prove that He who feeds bird and beast does not forget that man has physical needs. Did he, though his disciples would have scarred them away, press the little ones to his heart, and bless them with a benediction that reached to heaven? It was that he might teach the great lesson that no child is too young or too poor to stand before his Father's throne in glory. Or did he submit to the nigh outworn because typical Jewish ritual? It was that he might show to his brethren that disobedience to the divine laws cannot be divorced from

sorrow. No wonder, then, that his Father, delighted with him, exclaimed from the glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." For what earthly father does not measure his child's love by his active and continuous obedience?

In this way all act who take Christ as a model in working for God. They labour, not from mere self-will—love of praise or love of work—but because it is the best way of evincing their loyalty to their Father. They know that it is his will that not "one of the little" destitute or outcast "ones," who swarm in and darken the by-ways of our great cities, "should perish." They know that he wills to people heaven, not with unfallen spirits, but with redeemed sinners. Thus they tread the pestilential alleys and dens of our great cities to tell the ever-new story of the Cross. For they know from the records of his life, that were their Divine Master still on earth, he would not be found a guest in the palaces of Belgravia, but preaching in the haunts of vice and of fever. Like Jesus they know that they have a *direct* work from God, and thus they regard earnest spiritual work as the sole external symbol of internal obedience. For they fully enter into the feelings of Confucius, who, when asked if he could express the whole duty of life in one word, replied, "Will not the word SERVE do?"

2. *By a life of suffering.*

Well might Christ be pre-portrayed by the Holy Spirit as "a man of sorrows." From the time when as a babe he became an exile in Egypt to escape the murderous hand of Herod, to the hour that he bled on Calvary, his life presents the saddest spectacle in biography. The black shadows of life ever tracking his pathway, almost hid the Father from his view (Mark xv. 34). Not merely in Gethsemane, nor on the Cross, did he "learn obedience by suffering" (Heb. v. 8), but sorrow became his brother, interwoven as it was into the very web of his life. Nor till he could exclaim, "It is finished," was the woe-cup drained to the dregs, and he won his original glory. Now, why was this? Simply because Christ willingly and lovingly pleased his Father by drinking the penal cup earned by man's sin. For the Father had appointed him to be this world's sin-offering even before the Adamic sin (Rev. xiii. 8): and thus he was pleased to find that the Son, the sufferer, was at one with God, the projector of this costly plan of redemption.

And in their lower measure, so must all workers for God act,

would they live to please him. Clad in what John Milton called the "irresistible might of weakness," the cholera haunt must be invaded, that they may succour soul and body. Careless of physical ease, they must rise early and rest late, if by any means they can minister unto sin-stricken souls. Even though fruitage come not, and the heart sinks under the consciousness of sowing and never reaping, yet still they must scatter the precious seed broadcast. And worse than all, would they imitate their Divine model, they must still labour on, though ingratitude tracks their footsteps or the world views them with scorn as religious fanatics, who, with over-large hearts, have over-small brains. So did Jesus: for he endured all this, and more; till the Father said, "Come up higher; thou hast done thy work thoroughly and 'well.'"

II. Christ pleased man.

1. *By saving penitents.*

It was to do for man what they could not do for themselves that Christ stepped down into this wearying world. No half-Saviour was he—doing something for man, and then leaving him to do the rest for himself. No; for Christ well knew that, as man, left to himself, spoilt Eden, so, were his fingers to touch even the fringe of the plan of redemption, the goodly scheme would be spoilt. Thus, when Joshua, after the passage of the Jordan, erected a memorial altar, he was directed to use *whole* stones (Joshua iv. 3), unsmoothed by human agency. So Christ, altogether and unaided, saves the penitent. He may be a Manasseh, who has sacrificed his children to Moloch; a David, who has disgraced religion by treachery and murder; or a Mary Magdalene, urged to vilest sins by indwelling demons, till Pharisee and Sadducee point the finger of scorn at her;—yet he pleased man by showing that his Father's heart is large enough to gush out with love for the vilest, if they will but seek for forgiveness and repose in his loving heart.

Now are not all God's workers, Ragged School teachers especially, engaged in the same great work of reclaiming their fallen brethren? It is true that parallel with their model fails as regards *power*, but assuredly not as respects *purpose*. Both Christ and his brethren are pressed into service by the same motive. Like him, they point the pathway to that eternal home, the key of which it pleased the Father to give to his Son, that therewith he might "open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Like him, too,

they still sow on, though the crop is either never seen or is blasted by the east wind when it ariseth. For, as Luther well said, "We must not think the word preached in vain if it does not produce fruit immediately. There must first pass over the field wind, hail, rain, thunder." And think you that man is not pleased that, in imitation of Christ, you patiently and in unblenching faith sow the good seed of the kingdom? Not assuredly the Gallios and Herods of this world, but those who are either sowers in the same field, or those who are harvested in the great garner of God. By thus acting like Christ, your pathway to glory becomes paved with redeemed souls. Not that it pleases the Father to tell you all the results of Christ-like toil in this world; for if he did, he would have nothing to reveal in glory. For, perchance, one of the brightest jewels in your heavenly crown will be souls who were won to God through some remembered saying or doing of yours, and that *after* your death. Verily, such will be unexpected "crowns of joy, and rejoicing in the day of the Lord."

2. *He pleased by teaching.*

The noblest Bible Class is that of Jesus. Abel was the first member of it; countless millions have joined it; and the last saved soul will enter it, as there is no other way of being ripened for glory. Visibly, when he trod the sacred soil of Palestine, he held such a Bible Class. For whether Christ taught on the slopes of Olivet, gathered his mighty congregations of 10,000 in the wilderness, or made the deck of a ship his pulpit; still it was but one huge Bible Class which listened to his wondrous teachings. No wonder that sin-stricken souls, or those who were once steeped in crassest ignorance, declared, as he illustrated Old Testament prophecy by his life, "Never man spake as this man."

Yet docile scholars in Christ's Bible Class were rare. More came to carp, or to quibble, or to argue, than to learn. "O fools, and slow of heart," burst in agony from his lips, as he marked their darkness as to the true meaning of the prophets they revered. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves," were the heart-broken words he uttered to the multitudes, who, careless of soul-health, only heeded their bodily needs. "Be not faithless, but believing," was his exhortation to another, who, in blindness of heart, preferred sight to faith. And yet on he taught patiently and lovingly, until blinded souls were so illumined with the light of God as to trace by its beams the way to the city of the shining ones.

Now ought not all Ragged School teachers to take Christ as a model in these respects? They have not more dense scholars than he had; they have no more ungrateful ones than beset his pathway through life; and they have not scholars more squalid in aspect or more embruted by vice than he had in the woman of Samaria or the dying robber. Patiently teaching, his words at length entered the heart of many a wanderer from his Father's house: and oh, the joy of both sower and reaper when the film which darkened the spiritual eyesight was removed by the Holy Spirit, and they saw in their teacher the Anointed One of the Father!

Need we say more to fasten this homily on the conscience, so that it may colour the life for evermore? Yes; two thoughts occur, not ours, but those of eminent saints, and, as such, of eminent workers for God, who ever took Christ for their model.

(1) Teach, like the apostle of Ireland, Patrick, simply, "because the Spirit ferments in thy heart."

(2) Teach with all thy strength, because, in the words of John Wesley, "The man who may die to-morrow should work to-day."

PRACTICAL.

Like Jesus, scatter seed, though tempests blow,
And summer suns thy footprints rarely greet;
Nor doubt the burgeoning of seed you sow
On flinty soil, where scarce a blade will grow.
And when you cast your sheaves at Jesus' feet—
At harvest-tide—you evermore shall know
That rest with Christ is sweet.

A VISIT TO LODGING-HOUSES FOR TRAVELLERS.

A FEW Sabbath evenings ago the writer went for the first time, with a friend, to a lodging-house in one of the worst streets of Spitalfields to break the "bread of life." Having asked if we might be allowed to read a portion of God's Word and say a few words, and having received a favourable answer from the housekeeper, we entered. It may not be amiss here to describe the scene.

The room was a large front one on the ground floor, the walls whitewashed, and round the room near the ceiling was a rough shelf containing several basins, plates, dishes, and bundles evidently containing dishes tied up in dirty coloured pocket-handkerchiefs. A single jet of gas sufficed to light the

apartment, which might be termed the sitting-room, while a good fire was burning in a large grate, upon which were several saucepans and tea-pots, and in front a hanger for roasting and cooking, to which the lodgers at threepence per night have access. Rough forms were placed parallel round the room, and between them strong deal tables, so that the inmates sat face to face. Two women, three ragged, shoeless children, eight or nine men, formed our audience.

We took our seats, and after a few words in prayer, we sang two verses of the hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood;" and I then read Psalm xxiii. While these sweet and consoling verses were being expounded, tears ran down the cheeks of three of the men. We finished, and having asked for a parting blessing upon ourselves and those we were leaving, the housekeeper invited us to see a young woman who was very ill. Having lit a small piece of rushlight, he led us to the front room of the first floor, which, as well as we could see in the dim light, was parted off by partitions not reaching the ceiling. Opening the door of one of the partitions, we saw a young woman laid on a mattress, covered only by a horse-cloth, rough and ragged. A female friend was sitting on the side of the rude bedstead. The man was about to take away the light. "We ain't got no candle here, guv'nor," meekly said the woman, upon which he reluctantly left the light, and the poor sick one's friend stuck it with a little melted tallow against the rough boarding.

I said to the sufferer, "Do you wish us to speak to you about Jesus?"

"Yes, sir," was her weak reply.

"Do you know Jesus, and love him as your Saviour?"

"Yes, I trust I do."

"Are you sure that your sins are forgiven, and made white in the blood of the Lamb?"

"I think so."

My friend said, "Are you sure of it; do you feel that he died to save you —*you* personally?

And with an emphasis never to be forgotten, she answered, "Oh, yes.'

"Have you much pain?"

"My head is very, very bad."

I asked her if death had any terrors for her.

No; she seemed ready, when it should come, to welcome it as a friend.

The landlord here came up and told us we had better not continue speaking to her, as she was so weak it would exhaust her. We unwillingly bade her farewell, in the hope that if we should see her no more on earth, we might in heaven. We came down from that scene of poverty, sickness, and wretchedness, refreshed and cheered by such a testimony. After a hearty shake of the hand of all present, and leaving some tracts, we bid them "Good-bye." "Can't yer come again next Sunday?" said an old man as we passed out.

We went on further, giving tracts as we went, and several times were accosted with, "Give us one, master." We entered another house, the room, as before, being on the ground-floor, furnished similarly to the first, but considerably larger. There might have been nineteen or twenty persons of both sexes. We were going to sit near the door. "Go up to t'other end,

and then you won't have no interruption," said one. We did so, and sat ourselves down on one of the forms beside a dirty, unshaved, uncombed man, with our backs to the table. Having implored the Divine blessing amidst profound silence, during which many of them took their caps off and the pipes out of their mouths, we read a hymn, "My Jesus, I love thee; I know thou art mine." My friend then told them the plain and simple tale of Calvary, earnestly directing them to look there, believe, and be saved, pointing out the advantages of being a Christian, and the disadvantages of being without Christ and without hope in the world. He said that man by nature was an enemy to God; man loved darkness rather than light; thefts and robberies were committed when all was dark and quiet, lest they might be detected.

"Ain't you comfortable, Jim?" said a man who was resting his elbows on the table, holding in one hand a basin of tea, and in the other a thick slice of bread, his mouth being full as it could possibly be. Who Jim was I know not, but my attention was directed to our right, where a man sat resting his head upon his hand. The speaker went on to tell them of the pardon of the dying thief, and that though their crimes were of the deepest dye, there was mercy for them. We again concluded by prayer for a blessing. As we shook their rough, worn hands, there was a warmth of feeling which seemed to say, We are glad to see you. As I gave a tract to the man before alluded to, he said, "Oh, I'm a good scholar; I'll read it; I shall go to chapel some day." I told him the doors were open, and he would meet with a welcome.

Who will take up this work? The field is large, the labourers very few, but the wages good. Christian young men, the work is yours; acquire knowledge that you may impart it; *gather round you the children of the poor;* instruct them, unfold to them the plan of salvation, tell them of the love of Jesus, and lead them to him. Christian women, the work is pre-eminently yours; engage in a sacred effort for the salvation of your own sex in lanes and alleys of our great cities.—*Revival.*

J. F.

HELP FOR NEEDLEWOMEN.

For some time past a valuable, because much-needed, social experiment has been carried on in Hinde Street, Marylebone. It is known as the "Needlewomen's Institute." It was primarily established for the benefit of poor girls who, through some inherent physical weakness, or prostrated strength from overwork, were found unfit for domestic service. No one can visit our Ragged Schools without noticing many of this class. Some being of scrofulous habit—the sad legacy of bad living and foul air—they are too debilitated for domestic work, and so must earn their bread, if it be won at all, by their needle, or by some light business. Many such cases have been received into this Institution, to the equal advantage of themselves and of society.

It has also been the means of releasing many poor widows—such as we meet at our Mothers' Meetings—from the cruel grasp of those middlemen

who, in their "haste to become rich," have confirmed the Scriptural truth that they "shall not be innocent." For what care they for body or soul, so that they can coin an extra penny out of the blood of their victims? Would that Thomas Hood's "Song of the Shirt" was out of date! but, unhappily, it is still moaned out in many a garret of this great city. Verily, the "hire of the labourers, which is of them kept back by fraud, crieth," and will bring swift retribution.

Recently, too, many wives of those who have been too weakened by cholera even to seek for work, have been employed in the house or at their own *homes*. We are glad to notice this provision for home work, and to learn that it is carried out as far as is practicable. For, in most cases, for wives to work from home is but a synonym for neglected husbands and children, and for homes too filthy to be depicted. Thus, whatever is earned away from home does not compensate for the moral evils thereby engendered. Common sense, then, confirms the Biblical precept, that "wives should be keepers at home."

At present about one hundred women work in the house; the remainder take their work home. They assemble at nine a.m. and work till eight p.m., with intervals of one hour for dinner and half an hour for tea. One penny in the shilling is deducted from the earnings of the indoor workers, for which Miss Barlee, the author of "Homeless Poor," the earnest Manager, provides them with tea, milk, and cotton for their sewing, bread and butter not included.

By the following sketch, extracted from a striking volume just published, entitled, "Lending a Hand," it will be seen that due provision is made for soul as well as for bodily wants. And thus the things of time are made stepping-stones to the things of eternity.

"We paid a visit to the kitchen where the inworkers take their dinner and tea, and thought it most inviting; a large airy room, with clean benches and tables; a glowing fire on one side, where the rasher might be fried, an oven where a meat pasty might be warmed and made relishing, and the tea-caldron ready for use. A short prayer when they arrive in the morning gives its tone to the day's industry. On Friday afternoon a short service, from half an hour to an hour in length, is conducted in the large work-room by a clergyman. Miss Barlee is very glad when clergymen will volunteer assistance for this little service. It usually remains in the same hands a month; she can generally insure to her clerical friends a congregation of about a hundred women. She is also glad to provide for the instruction and amusement of the workers through the kind assistance of lady readers, who read aloud in the work-rooms.

"The cutting-out department is a business in itself; it is carried on in a separate room by two men cutters and one woman sorter. All we had seen hitherto was on the basement and first-floor; now we proceeded up-stairs to the work-rooms. In the first room, not Government shirts, with the coarse, strong work appropriate to them, met our view, but delicate stitching and frilling, which would bear comparison with the performances of first-class sempstresses. Our next visit was to the machine-room, where eight sewing-machines kept up a cheerful cackle, and eight young machinists, chiefly children or very young girls, turn off, with rapid movements of hand and

foot, the collars and wristbands for the Government shirts, or any part of ladies' garments where machine work is preferred. Up-stairs again—on the next and highest floor occupied by the workwomen—was the Inspector's room, flanked on either side by ordinary work-rooms. Every garment must be subjected to rigid measuring and overlooking from the Inspectress, every button fitted to its respective button-hole, before the work can be passed and paid for. It is satisfactory to be able to state that the operations of the Society we have hitherto described, which may be called the mercantile part, *are now self-supporting*, and the charitable aid afforded by the public in the way of subscriptions and donations goes now entirely to the support of the charity funds of the Institution. The importance of having a charity fund at command can perhaps only be fully appreciated by those who are daily brought into contact with grinding misery by a work such as that to which Miss Barlee has devoted herself. To use her own words, she can tell 'of widows with young children struggling with gaunt famine, dividing a penny roll among four children for their entire day's food; of emaciation and pain unchecked, preparing their victims for our hospitals; of women lying on bare boards during frost and snow, without covering or fire; of children born to deserted wives without any means to provide for them.' For such cases as these the charity fund committed to her for distribution, under the sanction of a committee, is invaluable. It is dealt out to the very poor and the sick by grants of coals, grocery (chiefly tea), clothing, sending the sick into the country for change of air, and the purchase of hospital tickets for those who cannot be nursed at home. Grants out of the charity are also sent to all the local clergy who manage branch institutions; as, for instance, at Chelsea, Whitechapel, Southwark, and Camden Town."

An Institution like this would be of great value at the East, where the distress among the poor needlewomen is even greater than at the West. The system of middlemen might be got rid of if an Institute were established to undertake the functions of a General Needlewomen's Guarantee Society, making itself responsible to employers for the work given out, and allowing the poor workers the full price of their labours. Whatever difficulties may present themselves in the way of carrying out this project on a sufficiently large scale, they are capable of being overcome, and the influence for good in every point of view is beyond calculation. We hope, then, that Christian ladies in the East will be speedily led to imitate their sisters in the West. Such an effort might be commenced on a small scale and gradually extended. Thereby, at least, the idler or the profligate would not be aided, but those who show by diligence and good conduct that they are really anxious for a "chance." For, after all, that is the truest charity which teaches the art of self-help, seeing that it elevates; whilst alms-giving too often further degrades the recipient. Let us, then, whilst we do our utmost to help the really destitute, ever aim to prevent their resting on human crutches. So shall we teach the great art of self-help, the true basis of all lasting social elevation.

HOWARD MISSION AND HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS.

THE Committees of the Ragged School Union, and of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, recently arranged for a joint social meeting of the labourers in these kindred works. The meeting was convened to afford the Rev. W. C. Van Meter, the Superintendent of the "Howard Mission and Home for Little Wanderers" in New York, an opportunity of giving an account of the plan adopted by our American brethren for the social and spiritual reclamation of outcast or destitute children. This meeting was held in the large school-room of Field Lane on November 21st last. The gathering was large, above 140 institutions being represented by their most active workers.

After prayer, led by the Rev. H. Murray, of North Cape, John MacGregor, Esq., occupied the chair. He said that he was glad to preside over the first united meeting of the Ragged School and Refuge Union. Something of importance must have caused such a conjoint meeting to be convened by their respective committees. Large as is the meeting, it must not be viewed merely as a demonstration of numbers, but it may be rather regarded as a representative meeting of those who are actively engaged in Ragged School or Refuge Work. Nor are we met merely to compliment our guest, Mr. Van Meter, an account of whose labours in New York they would shortly hear. For, if no practical result followed this gathering, their meeting would have been in vain. But he doubted not, that while all would be cheered by what they would hear of the efforts made by our American friends, they would gather some hints as to the best methods of meeting the social and religious claims of the destitute children of London.

The Rev. W. C. Van Meter then spoke to the following effect:—

He said that the tide of emigration to the United States is so great, that the population of Manchester was only equal to one year's emigrants to America. Of these a greater number land at New York than at all the rest of the American ports. We receive not only the energetic and industrious of the European populations, but also the idle and dissolute, the vagabond and the criminal. That is the reason why New York is such a wicked city. There are in it no less than 10,000 rum-holes—the term we use for what you call gin-palaces—and no epithets we could use would be strong enough to describe the character of the rum-sellers, or the evils to which their traffic directly leads. According to the police reports, there are 40,000 vagrant children in New York—enough to form a procession nearly nine miles long. Many of these neglected children are orphans, who don't attend any school, and sleep and live just as they can. The question presses upon us, What can we do for them? For if Christians do not rescue and lead them into the fold of Christ, what is to become of them? This led to the formation of the Moral Reformation Society; the Five Points Mission, established in 1850; the House of Industry, founded by W. Pease; and the Children's Aid Society, established by Mr. Brace, whose Christian benevolence caught fire from what he witnessed in England. He has provided hundreds of outcast children with homes; many of those present had sent their children, and they might send him as many more as they pleased.

The history of these missions is this. Some years ago, a young man named M'Donald, deeply impressed with the neglected condition of the poor, devoted

his time to doing what he could for them. People called him an eccentric character, half mad, and during his life he met with little apparent success. Still he laboured on until he fell at his post, and since his death God has honoured him by causing the seed which he sowed to bear fruit. The facts he had disclosed led to the formation of what were called Moral Reform Societies for the benefit of the poor. Changes have since taken place, and we have now no Moral Reform Societies, but in their place we have the American Female Guardian Society, or Home for the Friendless. That we call the mother of missions to the poor. The new Society was not carried on without some difficulties. Certain ladies connected with it were not quite satisfied with the mode of operation, and wished to conduct the work in another way: that was the origin of what is known as the Five Points Mission. The result of these difficulties was that, instead of one battery opened against the enemy, we have two, and either of the two is doing more than the original one did. Another important work was the House of Industry, founded by W. Pease. It is carried on in a place, nick-named from its notoriety, "Paradise Place."

Mr. Van Meter, in referring to his own special work, said that about five years ago he commenced the "Howard Mission," so named after the great English philanthropist, and the "Little Wanderers' Home," in New York. Since that time between 6,000 and 7,000 children have been rescued from street-life or bad home-training. In our Homes last May there were 649 inmates; only twenty-five of whom were children of Americans; 221 were of British origin. The work was thus suggested. The long, dark night of civil war began. All hearts were oppressed in view of the uncertain future. Sad visions rose before us. A long procession of uncounted thousands of orphans, and homeless, friendless, suffering children passed before me. Each had a sad, unwritten history peculiar to itself, often reaching back to the dawning of its sad life. Its history tells that the first sounds heard were often oaths uttered in anger; the first sights beheld were drunken, fighting wretches; the first steps were on errands of crime, or to whine out the beggar's lie—a history of neglect, hunger, cold, and rags—of early depravity—of discouragements and temptations. My heart was deeply moved, but what could I do? I had not a dollar, and business men felt that their first duty was to provide for their own families. Many charitable institutions were closing up or doing less, or were abandoned. Churches were diminishing expenses and shutting out appeals for aid. I dared not turn away these little ones whom my Saviour left in my care, yet what could I do? A voice whispered, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee." "God shall supply all your need." Relying upon these promises, I selected the vilest locality I could find—a community composed chiefly of the poorest and most de-perate and degraded representatives of many nations, and then resolved—By the help of Him who has called me to this work, no homeless child shall be turned from my door, neither will I go in debt. We then prayed earnestly for pecuniary help, and God answered our prayer then, as he has ever since. Well, the food for our little ones came as it was wanted, but often not before it was wanted. We have known what it is to find after breakfast in the morning that we had nothing for dinner; but before dinner-time the means came. On the first day the room was opened, 183 of these poor children came to me. We were alarmed, but we had enough for that day, and so we received them; and as the numbers increased, the food was provided.

Continued proofs of God's goodness were afforded to us. We wished to make the place as attractive as possible by painting the walls, varnishing, &c., and we would tell you how we were enabled to do this. We went to Mr. Pratt, who is largely engaged in painting, &c., and told him what we wanted. He just

sent it down, and charged us nothing for it. Our gas-fittings, &c., were obtained in the same way. We provide plenty of soap and water for the children. We do not wear a uniform, for we abominate that. If somebody would offer us uniforms for nothing we wouldn't have them. About 1,000 garments are now sent to us yearly.

Now the question comes, How do we dispose of these children? We send them principally to Chicago, at a cost per head of £2. Reliable men in each community aid us in selecting homes, and act as the guardians of the children in our absence. The child has a seat at the table with the family, moves in the same social circle, is brought up to some useful business, goes to school at least three months each year, attends Sabbath-school and church, is tenderly cared for in sickness and in health, and after it is eighteen years old receives wages. Should those taking it prove unkind or incompetent, or should it prove unsuitable for the place, it would be removed, and another home procured for it. We often visit them, and are kept in constant communication with them. The parents or guardians are informed of their locality, and are at liberty to write to them or visit them. Three-fourths have turned out well. But there is now a call for additional labour. Each emigrant ship increases the demands upon us. To meet these, it has become necessary to obtain another place, and erect a suitable building—a building as complete in all its departments as long experience can make it—one large enough to accommodate 1,000 children; also to lodge many homeless girls and furnish a Day Nursery and Laundry for the benefit of poor mothers, at a cost of £30,000. Though the special object of his visit to Europe was for the sake of his health, which had broken down, and not to solicit contributions, yet should it be their pleasure to provide a shelter for some poor little wanderer, or to aid in any other way, it would be most gratefully received. In the erection of the building, £30 will provide a shelter for one child as long as the walls stand; £10 will pay for the food for one for a year; £2 will pay the expenses of placing one in a good home; 4s. will feed one a week. He was glad to intimate that enough money had been given to him in England to fit up and furnish rooms for 1,000 children, and to pay the rent for one year. With what he had seen in the London Ragged Schools and Refuges he was much pleased, and would take back many valuable hints. He returned to America on Saturday, and should take several English children with him. They would not be banished. Sprung from the same stock, we are all brothers. Hence, when he thought of any possible political difficulties between the two countries, he would say, in the words of Abraham, "Let there be no strife between us, for we are brethren."

After Colonel Griffin, of Chicago, who has much aided Mr. Van Meter in placing the children in suitable families, had given some confirmatory remarks, a cordial vote of thanks was given to Mr. Van Meter, and, with thanks to the Chairman, and the benediction, this interesting meeting terminated.

In his valedictory address at Liverpool, Mr. Van Meter stated that he was grateful to say that he carried home with him £800 as a memento of his visit to England.

THE BOYS' BEADLE.

As the Act passed in August last on Industrial Schools is being enforced by the authorities, it will do much good. Poor children sent out to beg, or destitute of home, will be sent to Industrial Schools and cared for. Its

provisions require to be better known. The 14th section states that, if a magistrate is satisfied with the description given in the 14th section, he can send a child, apparently under fourteen, to a Certified Industrial School. Happily its application does not rest on the police, for "any person" can take a child found begging before a magistrate, whether actually or under the pretext of selling, offering articles for sale, or being in any street or public place for the purpose of so begging, or is found wandering and not having any home or settled place of abode, or visible means of subsistence, or being destitute, or an orphan, or having a surviving parent undergoing penal servitude or imprisonment. A child coming within any of the descriptions can be sent to an Industrial School, and many poor creatures will be housed before the coming winter.

Acting in accordance with the principles of this Act, but in the kindly tone of the Christian philanthropist, the Reformatory and Refuge Union have just appointed a new, but long-needed functionary. Though he does not wear a uniform, he has been dignified with the appellation of the "Boys' Beadle." As this novel experiment to rid our streets of idle or vagrant or friendless children is of great importance to their own welfare and that of society, we trust that many teachers will aid the "Boys' Beadle" in his useful work.

It is the special duty of this agent to "look after" those homeless, forlorn children, who teem in the streets of London. Those who are found destitute, or wandering, or begging in the dark evening, or huddled up on a door-step, he will approach as a friend. After sifting their cases thoroughly, and as their various circumstances require, he will take the children to their parents, or their friends, or to a school or refuge, or to a magistrate, or the police. The Beadle will help girls as well as boys. He will, however, have no more right to arrest a vagrant child than that which recent Acts of Parliament give to each of the public, and which is ofttimes indeed employed by benevolent individuals with more impulse than wisdom. But he will undertake as a special duty, and under the systematic management of a committee, that which has been hitherto done only fitfully and imperfectly, if done at all. For in too many instances persons delegate their own social duties to others, and then the old adage proves true, "What is everybody's business, is nobody's business."

The proposal to employ such an agent has met with the warm approval of experienced persons. It is evident that there will be plenty of work for him to do, especially at first; it is therefore hoped that the magistrates and the police, and the teachers of our institutions, will kindly aid the Reformatory Union in their efforts to make use of the Boys' Beadle. Not only should we thereby rid our thoroughfares of many a moral nuisance, but probably for every child thus rescued there would be one less tenant of our jails. At least, let us do what the law empowers us to do, and, as should be the case with all schemes of social improvements, let us not put off this day's work till to-morrow. For, if we thus procrastinate, we may find it a day too late.

A MISSING POINT IN EDUCATION.

Of all practical questions touching the condition and habits of the lower orders, education, as all the world knows, is the most perplexing. To go on in the old way, with keener wits, is rather an aggravation of the existing evil of ignorance, than a help towards its diminution. The children of the poor must be early put out to earn something for themselves. Their literary education, so to speak, embraces barely the rudiments of letters and figures, if it even embraces so much; and education of any other kind they have had none. They have been dragged up in the mire, have lived in a struggle for bread, with the wolf's appetite made ravenous by want: and when they are thrust out into the world to get something to eat, at an age when other children more happily circumstanced are out playing in the sunlight in gardens and fields, their vitality, which bounds like quicksilver through their half-starved frames, is left to find a vent as it may.

It is not very wonderful, then, that they should shriek and halloo through the streets when they are sent abroad on out-of-door business. It is their song of gladness, and they know no other way, and have no other chance of singing it. The printer's boy, who is pent up all day, and sometimes half the night, and who, trying to keep awake while the dismal work of reading is going forward, in which he takes no more interest than a girl of the same age might be expected to take in a discourse on logarithms, is subject during his incarceration in-doors to intolerable attacks of fidgets. He naturally enough breaks out into a tempest of delight the moment he finds himself free and at large in the open air.

All this is perfectly intelligible. But how are we to remedy the inconvenience which arises to all the rest of the world from the breaking out of juvenile elasticity? Well, it appears to us that the systems of education applied to the poor are deficient in one essential element. Reading, and writing, and ciphering do not comprise the whole round of human necessities. Boys have to grow up and fight the battle of life, and in the conflict other qualities are required besides and beyond those which the mere schoolmaster teaches.

It is necessary to know how to deal with other people; how to address them; how to listen to them; how to be civil and attentive; how to show deference to elders and superiors; and how to respect the feelings and rights of others. These are very common maxims of conduct, and may be found profusely scattered about in school-texts, and a hundred fantastical devices of embroidery; but they are never practically taught to poor children. In the great wealthy schools the item of deportment is carefully attended to; but no such item, as addressed to the actual business of life, has ever found its way into the education of the lowest stratum of the people, where it is much wanted.

The suggestion should be considered. It may not be possible to prevent boys from making stunning noises in the streets, but the experiment of endeavouring to modify their hilarity, by making the formation of something like manners a direct part of such education as they get, is worth attempting.

A NIGHT-SCHOOL TEA-PARTY.

A SHORT time ago the master of the national school sent me an invitation to join a tea-party, which he was giving that evening to the members of his night-school. On accompanying the rector to the large, well-lighted, and well-warmed school-room, we received a hearty welcome from our host, the young schoolmaster, and from his guests, about forty men and young men. Our host, himself the happiest in the room, waited on us assiduously during tea-time. After tea, the speeches began, all of which were deeply interesting to lovers of night-schools; but I will only give the substance of two of them—the first, the rector's speech; and the last, which was made by a working man, a rivet-maker, one of the oldest members of the night-school. The rector first gave a short account of the beginning of the night-school, eight years ago, when he first came to the parish; of the numbers who flocked to it the first winter; of the great difficulty he had in getting teachers, and also in keeping order. He then spoke of the gradual but great improvement in the night-school; of the good order which was maintained in it now; and of the praiseworthy attainments of its members; and how happy he felt in having been able, for some years, to give it entirely into the hands of the devoted schoolmaster whom they and he so much loved and respected, and to whose painstaking instructions, and that of his kind helpers, two nights in each week, they all owed so much.

He then continued—"But I am going to speak chiefly to-night of two of the members of our night-school who have been taken from us by death, and who, I believe, have reason to thank God through eternity that they ever came to the night-school. How well I remember the first of these two, coming at the early commencement of the night-school, he and his brother, after a hard day's work in the fields, on winter nights, up the dark lanes, in their clean white smock-frocks, to learn reading and writing, for the first time in their lives. It is slow work at their age to begin to get learning, and they seemed to make little progress. But by-and-bye the younger brother became ill (I think he was then about eighteen), and was confined for many months to the house, a patient but great sufferer; and then the little knowledge he had was turned to good account. He improved himself so much in reading as to be able to read the Bible, and to commit many passages to heart. A short time before his illness they had buried their dear mother, who, as she lay dying, soothed herself by singing, in a low sweet voice, the old hymns she had learnt as a little child at her Sunday-school. And now, in that same old-fashioned chimney-corner, her son lay, weak and suffering; and on the other side lay a young sister, who was taken ill about the same time as her brother with an illness which proved to be consumption. I have seldom seen so touching a sight as that which I saw each time I passed under that low door into that old cottage kitchen. There were the well-cared-for plants blooming in the casement window; there was the pile of well-kept books; and beyond, in the two dark corners by the fire-side, lay the two invalids, too weak to do anything but creep out a little when the sunshine was very bright. The elder sister, who left her place to nurse her sick mother, nursed these two with the same devoted and unwearying love;

but she was obliged to be absent nearly all day now, to earn the few shillings so necessary for them all. The young sister died first, after many months of pain and coughing, borne without a murmur. The day before she died (it will be three years ago next April), as I stood by her bedside, where she lay with closed eyelids, I said, 'Are you thinking of anything particular, dear?' 'Yes,' she answered; 'I am thinking, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!"' A few hours more, and she was safe through it. After that the sick brother lay alone all day, in his usual place, for six long months, and for one more month, on a dying bed. During that time he learnt many portions of the Scriptures by heart, which were his greatest comfort in those lonely hours of deep trial. One of these was Psalm xxiii.; another, Psalm xxvii.; another, St. John xiv. Truly he could say with the Psalmist, 'Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in my affliction.' In November I was obliged to be absent from home, and whilst I was away, the happy spirit left the poor suffering body to be with the Saviour whom he loved. During the last night of his life (one of great agony), his sister told me he repeated over and over, *dozens* of times, 'Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' He knew and felt what the 'Thou art with me' of the dark valley means, and now he is 'for ever with the Lord' in the golden light on the everlasting hills.

"I will now speak of the other member of our night-school, who was also taken from us by death. He, too, regularly attended here for a long time—a young man of about twenty years of age. When he became ill, he sent for me, earnestly desiring to see me, which he probably would not have done had he not seen and known me at the night-school. Poor fellow! I shall never forget my visits to him. His cough was dreadful, and his poor face bore the marks of the most racking pain. He lay on one bedstead, and on the other lay a little, wasted, dying sister, also in a consumption, who went home a fortnight before her brother. There was no other furniture in that poor room, not even a chair. All the verses I repeated to him, and the truths I taught him about our Lord Jesus, he drank in eagerly, though he said little. One day that I taught him, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,' &c., the good news seemed to enter deep into his heart. Some time afterwards, a little before he died, he called his mother to his bed-side. She saw directly that some happy change had passed over him. 'Mother,' he said, 'I am quite happy—I am going to heaven—my sins are forgiven.' 'What makes you think so, dear?' said his mother. 'I believe what the clergyman told me—"That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."' And so he continued happy till he died. I have little doubt that God first opened that young man's heart through the influence of the night-school."

The rector called on one of the oldest members of the night-school to say a few words. He is a hard-working married man, who has himself originally been brought out from a careless life by its influence, and who has not only learnt to read and write, but also, by God's grace, has become a true and devoted Christian, a communicant, Sunday-school teacher, and tract-distributor. He seemed very nervous in speaking before so many, and his voice

trembled through his short speech; but the few words he said I shall never forget, nor the earnestness with which he said them. "My dear friends,—What I wish to say to you is this: don't let us seek education only for this world, let us seek it also for the world to come. We don't come here only to learn what will be of use to us in our worldly affairs, but to learn what will help us to be better servants of our blessed Master, and more useful members of his Church. We learn to read that we may be able to read our Bibles, and be able to understand better what the will of the Lord is. And one thing I am quite sure of—if we, through God's grace, serve him faithfully and earnestly here on earth to the best of our power, and don't forsake him, *he'll not forsake us when we come to die.*"—*Home Visitor.*

E. C. O.

The Poet's Corner.

THE RICH AND THE POOR.

A PERSIAN PARABLE.

"Those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary."—1 *Cor.* xii. 22.

In the pleasant land of Persia
  Grew a rose-tree, tall and fair;
Never were there sweeter roses
  In the wide world anywhere.
Proud it swung its crimson censers,
  Till it seemed that odours rare,
From a thousand golden vials,
  Angel hands had emptied there.

Came a lady, tall and stately,
  Paused to view a tree so rare;
Heard the wild birds singing o'er it,
  Twined its buds amid her hair,—
When, down looking, for a moment,
  Loud she cried, "Alas! alas!
Here, among these regal blossoms,
  Grows a tuft of common grass!"

Stooping forward to uproot it,
  Then there came a cry of pain,
Faint and low, yet deep it entered
  In the lady's heart and brain;
And the lesson which it taught her,
  She could never quite forget,
Even when she bowed to worship
  'Neath the lofty minaret.

"Spare me, spare me!" thus it whispered;
"I may be of low degree;
But the stars look down from heaven,
And the rain-drops fall on me.
If you will but breathe my fragrance,
It to you will plainly show,
Though I am but grass so humble,
I among the roses grow."

ELLEN H. GATES.

The Teachers' Column.

PRACTICAL TEACHING.

THE author of "Ernest Graham" says that it is impossible that teaching can be profitable when the teacher and pupil have no interchange of ideas. The learner must tell the teacher what it is he does not understand, before the latter can know what he ought to explain. Explanation, to be clear, must be conversational; words must not be all on one side, and none on the other. The pupil should be able to ask for a repetition of this, or be allowed to say, "I don't quite understand that." Time must be given for the new ideas to take root before proceeding to a fresh part of the subject. Explanation without question and answer, without repetition, without pauses, and without a knowledge of individual difficulties, is, at best, unsatisfactory, and often wholly ineffectual.

There is one grand fault in all teaching of the present day, and that is, the want of practical application of abstract truth. The fact and its application should be taught at the same time. Like the two packets of a seidlitz powder; one is no good without the other. Our system of education gives us one packet, but leaves us to find its fellow for ourselves.

In all instruction you can discover the same fault. Lectures on physiology, for instance, teach us the length of time that the gastric juice takes to dissolve different substances; but they do not tell us how to regulate our meals. They should say, If beef takes from three to four hours to digest, don't eat a steak at breakfast at ten, and lunch at one. They should show that an eight o'clock tea cannot be a good thing after a five o'clock dinner; that putting muffins and hot decoction on the top of an undigested meal is like cramming an extra coat into a carpet bag already full. You may, indeed, manage to stuff it in, but you will burst the seams. They state that ligneous fibre is insoluble in the stomach; they should add, therefore, don't eat nuts, and peel your pears. After impressing upon us that diet is divided into calorifacient and nutrine material, they ought to tell us that this is the reason why we take bacon with our eggs, butter with our bread, and potatoes with our meat. What is the good of my knowing how many cubic inches of carbonic acid I exhale per hour, if I don't see the foolishness of sleeping with windows, door, and chimney closed; or what does it benefit me to be aware that an excess of nitrogen material is deleterious, if I consider it wholesome to eat meat three times a day; or of what profit is knowledge that food requires for its digestion a temperature of at least ninety degrees, if I see no harm in sipping iced wine after dinner?

Teachers should be taught how to apply their learning to the details of every-day life. The premises should not be separated from the practical conclusion.

The one may seem an easy deduction from the other, but it is not always evident. The mind is apt to content itself with the fact, and, if not suggested, its application remains a long time unthought of.

The Editor's Note-book.

HOW REVIVALS BEGIN.

A MINISTER, in his prayer, offered this petition: "Grant us, O Lord, a great and general revival of religion among us." The question arose at once, "Does he mean this; and does he *really* expect what he asks?" In this great and wicked city, where men are madly rushing on after gain, after pleasure, after any form of worldly gratification—can it be?

But then, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" and is not God "waiting to be gracious"? Greater marvels have been wrought than that a whole city should be moved. God is infinite in power and in love. There are around us thousands of professing Christians, each one of whom has solemnly promised to renounce the world, to let his light shine, and to endeavour to lead others to Christ.

We will not say how they *have* lived, nor how fulfilled their vows; but let each one from this time be faithful to his covenant. Suppose each one to pray earnestly, and from the heart, "Lord, revive thy work, pour out thy Spirit on my own heart, and on those who love thee not!" Suppose each one to follow up this prayer with a word in season to any around him, to speak with true and deep feeling, how long could men remain unmoved? The revival in Ireland was accurately traced to the prayers of three young men newly baptized into Christ.

The work is done. When our own hearts are moved, a revival is begun; and we cannot be in earnest on any subject, much less on this, without producing an effect on others. We have need of repentance *among ourselves*—we have need of faith; and when we have this, and pray from the heart, we shall be answered, and even this whole city may be moved.

Then may we see this "great and general revival" for which we have prayed, with how much sincerity God knows, who knows the heart.

Christian, will you begin—and *you*—and *you?* And will you not begin at once? now that the "new year" calls for a new life of activity in Christ's service?

HOME-WORK.

THERE are persons who are loth to work where they find themselves. Yet when God raises up servants to work, we may expect that he would use them at first near home. We are apt to say, "Oh, there are difficulties and hindrances at home; I will go to a distance. I want to do a great work, to speak to a large number." This is often a snare of the enemy. In Nehemiah's time, every watcher was to be "over against his house" (Neh. vii. 3), and workers wrought over against their own house (Neh. iii. 10, 23, 28). We hesitate to do some small thing, but are willing to undertake "some great thing." We can volunteer to look after 1,000 sheep, but not after two or three. But where did David learn the victory over the lion and the bear? where did he learn to feed God's people? Was it not in keeping "these few sheep in the wilderness"?

The Lord give us grace, not so much to aim after great things, but to take up, earnestly and fervently, what the Spirit gives us to do. For then we shall not run hither and thither in doubt as to what we ought to do, but shall stand till he sends, and, when we are wanted, we shall say, in the repose of faith, like Isaiah, "Here am I, send me."

Our Library Table.

Analysis of English History. By W. C. Pearce and S. Hague, LL.B. London: Murby.

This epitome of English history is the concisest we know consistent with clearness, fulness, and correctness. No salient point is omitted which bears on national progress; for it is not merely a history of kings, as are too many of our larger histories, but, as all national narratives ought to be, it is also a history of the people. It thus shows us how England from insignificant and small beginnings has become the mighty power she now is. This work is intended as a text-book for schools, and as such we can heartily recommend it. The style is clear and vivid: and as two words are not used when one will suffice, it is crammed with historical facts. We think that an occasional reading in our Boys' Night Schools—say one complete reign on one evening—would prove useful. Not only would they thereby learn something of the history, its successes and its failures, of their own country, but the necessarily restricted range of study in Ragged Night Schools would be thereby enlarged.

Do it Yourself. London: Book Society.

This little work gives a striking illustration how the little leads gradually to the great; for the great work it narrates all sprang from this hint being given to a lady who mourned over the fact that few Christians attempted to cope with the spiritual darkness of Brighton. "Do it Yourself." This led to her establishing the Brighton Home of Hope about two years ago. It now embraces a home for outcast or destitute girls, house to house visitation by Bible women, and direct preaching of the word to the very poor in the mission-room. Like all kindred works, these agencies have brought salvation into many houses where sin and sorrow formerly reigned. The great object of the founder, Miss Gordon, is to train poor girls for domestic service. Nor, in a day when it is almost easier to find a thief than a good servant, is such an object without pressing necessity; and thus all who endeavour to supply this need must be regarded as public benefactors. The progress of this Institution renders it needful to occupy larger premises; and we shall be glad if this notice leads any reader to tender pecuniary aid. For whether we are called to teach, or whether our duty is to give, the author's motto is the right one for all Christians, "Do it Yourself," seeing that we can neither delegate our duties nor our responsibilities to another.

The Cottager and Artisan. London: Religious Tract Society.

Like every serial issued by the Society from which this magazine emanates, it is sound, and therefore safe. It is replete with religious incidents which are well calculated to interest the class for which it is intended. It is clear, too, that no expense is spared in the woodcuts, with which every page abounds. We cannot, then, but echo the verdict given by the public in favour of this magazine.

The Children's Gallery.

WHAT A SERVANT DID FOR SOCIETY.

The author of "Lending a Hand" says, "Whose is the name which awakens an electric thrill in the hearts of the working men and women of England? Who has worked for them with untiring zeal, in parliament, in com-

mittees, and on the platform, and in a hundred ways less obvious though more laborious? Colliers, operatives in factories, men, wives, daughters, little children, couple his name, when they hear it, with a fervent benediction. To whom then does the Earl of Shaftesbury trace the earliest implanting of principles which have given their stamp to his whole beneficent life? *To a servant.* It is by his kindness that we are furnished with the following particulars:—

"'My daughter has asked me to tell you something about the very dear and blessed old woman (her name was Maria Millar) who first taught me in my earliest years to think on God and his truth. She had been my mother's maid at Blenheim before my mother married. After the marriage she became housekeeper to my father and mother, and very soon after I was born took almost the entire care of me. She entered into rest when I was about seven years old, but the recollection of what she said and did, and taught, even to a prayer that I now constantly use, is as vivid as in the days that I heard her. The impression was, and is still, very deep that she made upon me; and I must trace under God very much, perhaps all of the duties of my later life to her precepts and her prayers. I know not where she was buried. She died I know in London; and I may safely say that I have ever cherished her memory with the deepest gratitude and affection. She was a "special providence" to me.'"

Correspondence.

FRUIT FOUND AFTER MANY DAYS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Dear Sir,—It has occurred to me that just at this season, when we are so near the close of the year, a few facts relative to the New Year's Address in your Magazine of 1861 ["The Two Stewardships," vol. xiii., p. 1] may not be uninteresting to you. You will perhaps remember that it contained a very earnest appeal for voluntary teachers in your Ragged Schools, the writer suggesting that if only the heart were disposed to the work, each could easily find out where their services were most needed. Upon reading this I felt that it was a call to me to be up and doing; so one day, shortly after, I set out, accompanied by a dear Christian friend (now in Heaven), in search of the desired employment. The first school we visited, we were informed by the lady-superintendent, was well supplied with teachers, but she directed us to another connected with it, to which we at once wended our way. It was situated in a street I had continually passed, but until then I had not the slightest idea of the interesting work carried on in that neighbourhood; the master of the school welcomed me warmly, and on Sunday evening, February 17th, I commenced my labours there. For a few months I taught the *girls*, but the *boys* were very troublesome, and it was agreed to try what female influence would do for them. On looking back I find it is just five years since I took my first class of boys, and with what thankfulness I review the past I cannot tell you; anxieties and discouragements I have of course often and often met with, but in spite of all this the work has become so dear to me that I know not now what I should do without it. I shall not weary you with a detailed description of "my boys," although to

me the personal history of most of them possesses a peculiar interest; my object is rather to state some of the results which have arisen from this one response to that New Year's Appeal. There are now at least *twelve* workers instead of only *one*, not all teaching in our school, though most are, the rest, having been induced to visit it with me, have learnt to love the work, and have become teachers in the various towns to which they have gone. An Evening School for Boys, which had not previously existed, has been established; also a Penny Bank; and one member of my class, who still comes to us in the week for secular instruction, now delights to employ his Sundays and every spare evening in seeking to win others, in his own station of life to the Saviour whom he has found and learned to love and trust as his only hope and refuge.

I should like to convey, through you, my thanks to the writer of that article, for his word in season. Trusting that the coming year may prove one of increased usefulness and happiness to all at present engaged in the work, and also that it may usher in many *new*, but earnest and faithful, friends to the cause,

I am, &c.,

Dec. 7th, 1866. G. L.

Notices of Meetings.

LAMB AND FLAG.

On December 5th last, the twenty-first annual meeting of this school was held. Alderman Lusk, M.P., presided. The report, read by Mr. W. J. Watts, narrated the history of this institution. The interest of the missionary of that district (Mr. Humphrey) having been awakened on behalf of the hundreds of poor naked ignorant children with which these courts abounded, he took a small ill-ventilated room in Lamb Court, and on Sabbath day collected together as many as it would contain, and there taught them the first principles of that truth, which to know "is life everlasting." His self-denying efforts having come to the knowledge of a few friends, a committee was formed for carrying on the work thus commenced. The lease of a house in Lamb Court, locally known as "Jack Ketch's Warren," from the fact of its having been a training-place for young thieves, was obtained, and altered, at a considerable cost, into a school-room, which was opened as a Sabbath-school, with an attendance of about sixty children. Thus was the foundation of a good work laid; and in carrying it on many difficulties, locally and otherwise, were to be surmounted. The average attendance last year was—girls, 75; boys, 90. The next step was the establishment of the Clothing Fund, which was set on foot at the second annual meeting by Dr. Stanley, late Bishop of Norwich, after having paid a visit to the school. During the past year the number of depositors has been 119; amount deposited, £36 7s. 7d.; bonus, £8 17s. 11d.; total, £45 5s. 6d. The fourth feature that presents itself in proper order was the establishment of the Christmas Treats in 1847, which have been continued up to the present time with great success, special contributions having been liberally given towards this object; and upon each occasion a balance has been left in the treasurer's hands, sufficient to meet the bonuses of the Clothing Fund, and the entire expenses of the Infant School. A very satisfactory addition to these treats has been an Old Scholars' Meeting. The fifth step was a Week Evening School, to afford instruction to such as could not avail themselves of it during the day. The numbers on the

books during the past year have been:—girls' average attendance, 60; boys' ditto, 75, some of whom have become useful teachers. An Infant School was opened in the early part of 1849, under the care of a trained mistress. After referring to the necessity for enlarging the building at a cost of £300, it was reported that in 1853 was established, apart from the funds for carrying on the scholastic operations, a Sick and Maternal Association, which has proved a great blessing and comfort to many a wretched home. Consequent upon the visitation of the poor people at their own homes, in connection with the Sick Society, the ignorance prevailing in the locality amongst the parents of the children weighed much upon the minds of the Ladies' Committee, who resolved to carry out a Mothers' Meeting, which, from the early part of 1854, has been held on Wednesday evenings. In the year 1856, it was resolved to open a Sabbath Evening School, which was done in the month of February of that year. The results attending this stem of the growing educational tree have been satisfactory. In the year 1861, the committee took lease of another house, and the present building was erected, at an outlay of about £600, which is now all liquidated. The improvidence of the children, and, in many cases, of the parents, suggested to the teachers and committee the importance, as well as the duty, of opening a Penny Bank, with the view of cherishing, among the poor, habits of saving. This portion of labour has worked satisfactorily, and last year there were 50 depositors, and the amount deposited was £11 14s. 2d. In November, 1862, the first Flower Show was held, which has been continued annually from that date, every show improving, and proving the importance of such operations as a means to an important end. With a view of endeavouring to lead the poor people to be cleanly, prizes for clean and tidy rooms were set on foot, in connection with the Flower Show of 1865. There were 19 competitors, the time of trial extended over seven weeks, each home being regularly visited by the ladies of the committee. Total receipts, £381 8s. 11½d., including £48 15s. 9½d. due to the treasurer at the March audit, all of which had been expended in conducting the schools.

The meeting was addressed by O. Stock, Esq., M.P., Deputy Judge Payne, Rev. R. Maguire, and T. Nolan; and Messrs. Willcocks, Gent, Hicks, and Best.

SYDNEY.

THE annual meeting of the Sydney Ragged Schools was lately held, his Excellency Sir John Young in the chair. The chairman was supported by Lord John Taylour, the Bishop of Sydney, the Dean of Sydney, &c. The annual report stated that last year there were 412 scholars in the schools. This year there are 476, viz., 386 boys and girls attending the day schools, and 90 boys attending the night and Sunday evening schools. More boys have been satisfactorily placed in situations in the country within the last twelve months than in any previous year, and, with scarcely an exception, they are doing well. So constantly do the boys who attain the age of twelve or thirteen years secure employment, that it is difficult to carry on industrial work to any great extent in the school. A number of lads, however, are engaged in making picture frames, in which they succeed very well. The committee have had to stretch out a hand to endeavour to help discharged juvenile prisoners. A great difficulty in the way of efficient aid is the want of a refuge to which to take them until suitable situations are obtained. Not only are boys and girls instructed in three day schools and the two Sunday schools, under the care of your committee, but, by the teachers and others, the scholars are visited in their homes, and good is done among the parents. Some of these are induced to take the temperance pledge; some are persuaded to attend the social meetings which are held, at which they learn to sew for their children, listen to suitable addresses, and join in devotional exercises.

Papers, Original and Selected.

TRAINING-SHIP FOR HOMELESS BOYS.

In our volume for 1865, p. 49, we referred to a meeting of homeless boys which was held in the Great Queen Street Refuge. Casual ward, and slum, and den were invaded, to collect this assembly of strange lads with still stranger histories. Out of 400 invited to tea, 144 accepted the invitation; many staying away simply because, unused to kindness, they thought the news too good to be true, or because they fancied that it was only a trap to hand them over to the magistracy.

The groups of lads there gathered what pen could adequately depict? *Outré* in dress and manners; with skins which told that hydrophobia prevailed; and with a dialect not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary—no spectacle could be more singular. There was scarcely one present whose history, if woven into a novel, would not have confirmed Lord Byron's adage, "Truth is stranger than fiction." We sometimes see these apparitions of woe in our leading thoroughfares, in parties of two or three. Unlike our juvenile "roughs," being almost devoid of animal spirits, they do not whoop, and grimace, and dance, or vex the dull ear of night with songs more remarkable for noise than melody. Here, then, were 144 of these juvenile waifs and strays of society gathered into one seething mass—old men in aspect, though only boys in years. Out of the 144 present, no less than 87 were without father and mother; and only 6 had both parents living. No wonder, then, that they were "homeless." And what is the *future* implied by that terrible word? Nothing less than one of two fates—either an early grave, or a felon's cell!

Of those present, there were few in whom some physical infirmity could not be traced, born solely of semi-starvation. Ophthalmia rendered the eyes of many red and tearful. Scrofula, too—that

sad legacy of bad food and still worse air—had graven its mark on many. Nor ought these physical evils to excite any wonder. The only marvel was that body and soul had been kept together so long. For they had eked out existence by begging, or by casual jobs in all weathers; and when they had not earned the three-pence demanded for a bed in the "lodging-houses for travellers" in the Mint, they had either slept in foul casual wards or on door-steps, two or three creeping together to procure animal warmth. Saddening as these facts are, they are but specimens of the life-history of thousands of poor boys, both in London and in the provinces; and, were it not for Ragged Schools, the permitted existence of these poor homeless ones would lead to a doubt whether the boasted Christianity of England is not a mere sham—a thin veneer, to hide the utter selfishness within.

Happily, there are some Christians who *really* believe the Bible, and hence refuse to echo the Cainite question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The fact, too, that so many homeless lads were willing to forsake slum, and den, and casual ward, was most satisfactory; for it showed that many were anxious to escape from their wretched condition. What they wanted was a Christian friend to lift them out of the gutter and to show them how to win their bread honestly: for the desire of very many can be best expressed in their vernacular, "We wants a *chance*."

Nor is this feeling merely transitory, or simply evoked by acts of kindness "few and far between." We have heard of many homeless boys who, half-starved and reckless, have suddenly yielded to temptation, and robbed food-shops; and then were so conscience-stricken at their crime that they have attempted to commit suicide. As a class, they are not thieves; for they usually lack the cunning and that love of animal gratification which is characteristic of professional thieves. These homeless boys, then, are not so much wilful law-breakers as street lazaroni, whose whole history is a continuous struggle for life. They sell fusees for cigars, hold horses, carry bags to railway-stations, or pretend to sell articles, as a screen to mendicancy. Yet, from the temptations of street-life, they are necessarily ever on the verge of crime; and thus the homeless boy of to-day may become the criminal of to-morrow. For, give a group of homeless boys under the arches of the Adelphi or our railways, and we may be sure that a Fagin is not far off.

From what we personally know of the promoters of this meeting,

we know that, in a day of "sensational" literature, the motive was not sensational. It was, doubtless, a striking, practical protest against the public for permitting such a class to grow up, fester, and at last to rot, in our very midst. But it was not merely a protest against Christian supineness; the object rather being to learn what were the real feelings of these juvenile Pariahs, and to see whether they were willing, and in what way, to win their bread by honest industry. Their feelings were tested by Lord Shaftesbury, by a show of hands; when it was found that, like the bulk of English boys, they were eager for a seafaring life. Here, then, was the raw material ready to supply a pressing national want. For, whilst most other trades are overstocked with labourers, the mercantile navy, from the paucity of British sailors, has to be manned to a great extent by Lascar and Hindoo, and other far away tribes.

After the subject had been well ventilated, and the wishes of these homeless lads were communicated to the Government, they readily granted the *Chichester*, a fifty-gun frigate which had never been out of dock, as a training-ship for homeless boys. She is moored off Greenhithe, under the command of an able and, what is equally essential, a pious Captain. The fittings were estimated to cost £3,000; but the Admiralty have supplied the fittings from Government stores at a cost of £2,129 15s. 8d., conditionally on that sum being raised within nine months. The hope expressed at the inaugural meeting on December 20th, that the House of Commons will see fit to remit this amount, we trust will be realized; for surely when, in the shape of breech-loaders and rifled cannon, such vast sums are being spent, an amount comparatively so small may be well devoted to saving boy-life, and so of adding to the moral wealth of this country. Nor can we doubt that this will be the result. The contrast between the boys when admitted into the Refuge and their present aspect is marvellous. Their healthy, vigorous look; the agility with which they climb the masts of the *Chichester*; and their respectful obedience to the orders of their superiors, excited the admiration of all who assisted at the inaugural meeting.

The inaugural speech of Lord Shaftesbury gives such a lucid explanation of his aims and those of his coadjutors, that we have made the following extracts, as they give a full summary of this, and indeed of the whole, Ragged School movement. He said that "his own experience amply confirmed everything that had

been said as to the condition of the homeless lads, their character, and the state of body and mind in which they were. The movement was no longer an experiment; it had been tried, and had shown itself a success. They had proved that if they took out of the streets of London the most forgotten, the most naked, the most apparently miserable boys they could find—if they clothed them a little, and breathed upon them the breath of life, they would turn out to be diamonds and jewels equal to the very best that adorned the noblest crowns. Look at the conduct of the lads who had already been rescued. It might be supposed from their antecedents, and from the lawless race to which they were thought to belong, that they would show nothing but lawlessness and insubordination. But, in fact, the Committee had met with nothing but the reverse. When it happened that the Schoolmaster of the Refuge was taken ill, and that there was no one to look after the boys but the old cobbler, and when the appeal was made to the boys that it was now for them to show what sort of stuff they were made of, and to justify the kindness of their friends, what was the result? They behaved themselves admirably, and though at that time necessarily left a good deal to themselves, they never gave a moment's trouble, He believed that 160 boys never came together who were so docile, so obedient, so grateful, so full of promise. It was a positive certainty that there was the stuff in those boys to become true, honest, dignified, and worthy citizens of our blessed old mother country. It was true that there had been some—he would not say argument—but argumentation against the movement. It had been urged that they ought to resort to the Industrial Schools. Well, he had no objection; but, in point of fact, he had only been able to discover two of those schools in all London. He could not speak without great indignation of the letter of a Government Inspector, which had appeared in a newspaper, condemning the present plan on the ground that when the boys left the institution no one cared at all for what afterwards became of them. He did not hesitate to say that this was a libel. The children were not only cared for while they were in these institutions, but also after they had left them, with a tender care and solicitude hardly inferior to that which a parent showed for his offspring. Situations were procured for them; they were encouraged to come for advice in their difficulties; and, in short, they were watched over, as far as could be, from the cradle to the grave.

They proposed to educate the boys for the sea, because the

boys generally took to that calling with avidity; and every sailor knows that a man could never be a good seaman unless he had his heart in it. When the question was put to the boys at the first meeting, whether they would like to go to a ship in the Thames to be educated for the sea, every hand among them was held up in favour. And also, it was a matter of vital importance in the present day that they should be bringing up sound and honest men for the Royal and mercantile marine. The Royal marine might, perhaps, take care of itself; but the merchant service wanted able and good sailors—men willing to obey, accustomed to discipline, and capable of self-control. He believed it was the fact that half the wrecks that occurred were owing to the drunkenness of the seamen. Was it not a scandal that this great country, whose sole defence, under God, rested in her navy, could not man her ships, and had to depend in a large degree upon foreigners? It seemed absolutely necessary that everything possible should be done to keep up the marine, and he believed if the public supported the present movement so that they might keep 400 boys on board, they might, from year to year, send forth some 200 lads to the merchant service or to the colonies. But something more was also necessary. They must look to the conduct and to the Christian principles of the shipowners. They must see that the vessels to which they sent the boys were furnished with proper accommodation for the health and for the morality of the men. It was absolutely necessary that these two things should go together. He could foresee the day when the population of England, instead of being too great, would be too small to meet all the necessities of this great empire, and when men would no longer walk through the streets of London with a crushing sense of the misery and want and degradation with which they abound; and by giving to these lads a true, sound, Christian education, they would enable them to go to all the ports and harbours of the world, carrying a blessing with them. Instead of making people cry that the English sailor was the most profligate or degraded of the English race, our sailors should have it said of them that they are generous in nature, capable of every good, and of profiting by everything that is done in their behalf."

The only subject of regret is that at present only 50 boys will be so trained as sailors. This is but a small proportion of the homeless boys of London; but better a small beginning, thus to weed our streets of those who, homeless and friendless, are now

disgracing our common Christianity, than wait till the experiment can be tried on a grander scale. The Managers, however, are prepared to train very many more homeless lads as sailors if the public will perform their share of the work, that is, by supplying adequate funds.

Surely, then, there is every claim on those who respond to the words of Christ, "It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." For, in the words of Victor Hugo, who, at his Christmas dinner to forty of a similar class in Jersey, beautifully said, "Do you know anything more sad than the sufferings of children? When we suffer—we who are men—we endure nothing but what we deserve; but suffering innocence, is it not the saddest thing in nature? Here Providence entrusts us with a portion of its own functions. God says to man, I confide to thee this child. And he does not confide to us our own children alone—for it is simply natural that we should have care for them—and the brute obeys this law of nature better sometimes than man himself. God entrusts us with all the children that suffer. To be the father, the mother, of poor children—this is our highest mission. To have towards them a parental feeling is to have a fraternal feeling towards humanity. To relieve children—to train them into men—such is our duty. There are two ways of building churches. They may be built of stones—they may be built of flesh and bone. The poor whom you have succoured are a church that you have built from whence prayer and praise may ascend to God." Yet whether the higher aim of the promoters of this movement, namely, training homeless boys for heaven, be realized or not, we are sure, at least, that for every lad thus rescued there will either be one less occupant of a premature grave, or one less tenant of Newgate.

KENT STREET: ITS DENS AND ITS PEOPLE.

BY REV. JAMES AMOS, M.A.

PASSING over London Bridge you come into Southwark. On your right hand and left, behind the main street, there are extensive neighbourhoods, principally inhabited by the poorer classes. As you go on down "the Borough" things do not improve. Coming to a turn on the left you are in Kent Street, where squalid misery is evidently the order of the day, and where the eclipse of wealth may be regarded as total. Kent Street must be looked upon as a

family name. It not only expresses the street itself, where there are some small tradesmen, but it is applied to about fifty children, which, in the shape of courts and alleys, nestle round it. The parent street is about half a mile long, with only one or two streets on either side offering a way out. About half-way down on the left from London Bridge the street begins most recklessly to indulge in its courts and blind lanes of small houses, throwing them off twice in the form of three parallel lines crossed in the middle. It is here that the seven to eight thousand people of the parish of St. Stephen's are condensed. It will be seen that it is a curious feature that so large a population, in going to the outer world, have for a good way to make use of Kent Street as a common avenue. There is a certain indescribable brotherhood amongst all the people. Everybody is passing everybody, and gets to know more or less about everybody. It will be also seen, that if evil is permitted uncontested to raise its head in a neighbourhood so remarkably constituted, its influence must extend far and wide. On the other hand, it may be felt there are no less wide-spread blessings which may be looked for when Truth shall go forth to dispute the field.

It must be assumed that the people are all of the very poorest class. To their praise it must be said, that amongst very many there is a far more determined effort than they are usually credited with to keep the wolf from the door. Writing and reading is not much in our way. A woman some little time since made some pretence of being able to follow reading. It came out she did not know what page to turn over, whether that on the left or right. We are, however, decidedly strong in mending kettles, grinding knives, and in making brushes. Any little toy, utensil, or ornament, either in wood, wire, or paper, both men and women can turn out astonishingly well. Money, however, is not to be got in this way, whether you supply a shop or choose to hawk your goods about the street yourself. It is almost like, as a man who makes toy brushes expressed it, "giving two farthings for a halfpenny." An offensive business is carried on in some of our homes. Haddocks are brought from Billingsgate—to begin with, sometimes not so fresh as they might be—and parts of them being cut off to lie about for some days, they are finished by being smoked in the yard behind over a sawdust fire. The men of Kent Street, however, principally favour the calling of the costermonger, getting their living in the street, as the phrase goes, by selling from barrows fruit, vegetables, and fish, procured at the markets very early in the morning. It must be confessed, however, that these operations, even when people are working all the year round, do not seem sufficiently remunerative to enable the man to meet with comfort the rent, the food, and the clothing for himself and family which it would be most desirable that he should be able to supply. It must never be forgotten how weather, state of trade, and health, are ever putting a spoke into these wheels of poor life.

It is thus that, assisted by an improvidence and want of economy which seems almost an instinct in very poor people, they are, as a class, ever on the brink of a state of heartrending wretchedness into which they are continually falling. In winter time the distress is wide-spread and appalling. It scarcely does to think of a number of poor and would-be hard-working people—if work could be had—who unrepiningly endure the mental as well as physical misery of being gradually starved. To know anything of Kent Street is to know of

by no means a few, and those not the vicious or the intemperate, in comparatively early life, stricken down in the contest for subsistence; the young in years long ago having put on the old man or woman, and literally dying by inches. It is harrowing to follow the poor into that one room to which many a family is consigned; living, if life it may be called, upon cheap, bad food, sometimes without a fair supply of water, and usually surrounded by a drainage which is foulness itself. What wonder if a certain district of the parish, at the beginning of last year known by the title of St. George's New Town, and its neighbourhood, should be at the very head in the metropolis of a list of places put forth as hot-beds of typhus fever? What wonder if, from insufficient house-room, and perhaps, still more, from many distinct families being all under the same roof, there should arise evils which seem to defy all immediate treatment, and threaten to hand down to future generations the heritage of an increasingly miserable and vicious population? It is scarcely too sweeping a remark to make, that the social life of the very poor in London, to judge of it by Kent Street, is already all but rotten to its very core. Heads of families living together without being married, one or other of such heads of families in some cases having a wife or husband elsewhere, and instances of much grosser enormity, are to be met with in every street.

The difficulties of really getting at these people with the view of cheering, elevating, or directing them, are neither few nor small. To return to the costermongers and to the hawkers, whose calling may be regarded as representing that of the heads of all our families. Not a few of these folks have professedly taken up this particular line of business because it offers few restraints upon them. There is little of the discipline which is found in learning a regular business, and none of the self-control which is learnt by having been under orders. The costermonger and hawker is a master in the world of London. His is a wild, roving life, his customers scattered, far-distant, and but little superior to himself. His trade is full of excitement—constantly going down or up. His besetting temptation is trickery and dishonesty. It will surprise no one if in his own neighbourhood, surrounded only by associates just like himself, he should be found not fearing God or regarding man—at once excitable, shrewd, and suspicious. This picture is far from being always realized, but the whole training and occupation of these classes, while it renders religious instruction most urgent, must ever necessitate it being approached with no ordinary wisdom, labour, and patience.

That, however, which greatly keeps down a neighbourhood like Kent Street is the existence of a large criminal element in the population. Kent Street, time out of mind, has been the abode of thieves, and circumstances daily occur to keep fresh the brand upon our brow. Not to go beyond to-day, the clergyman heard of a fine young man, that he had been taken up once more for picking pockets, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. His aged parents spoke of him with some pride. They explained that for similar offences he had been in prison now five times; they were confident he would not alter until he had had a "long inwards," which turned out to mean till he had been transported for some years. The stock-in-trade of these men is a dashing suit of clothes, with a very elaborate shirt-front. When such fellows are taken, they send to their friends to come for these things, who are sometimes allowed for their trouble to put them into a pawn-

shop until the prisoner is once more free. In the present instance it appeared that this culprit belonged to a gang of twelve. Whatever any obtained, it was thrown into a common treasury and equally divided. It further appeared that any day they went out, amongst them all, one, if not two, usually brought in about five guineas' worth. This evil, assuming in Kent Street the proportion of a trade amongst no inconsiderable number, infects more or less thousands of the poor, and it even breaks out sometimes in the most malignant form in the children of those parents who are really striving to bring up their families in better ways.

A CHILD LEFT TO HIMSELF.

From the anniversary sermon of the Sunday School Union, preached by the Rev. Samuel Martin, we extract the following observations on some of the social evils involved in children—poor or rich—being left unchecked to follow the promptings of the "evil heart of unbelief."

"A child left to himself" is a loss and injury to society. We say, not a loss merely, but a positive social injury. Say that such an one breaks his country's laws, and is punished; admit that he is removed from the streets to the prison, and from prison to a foreign penal settlement—society has not obtained a clear riddance of that child. So the body social and the punished and banished culprit remain in sympathy with each other. Surgical operations, it is said by the highest authorities in such matters, are the opprobrium of the healing art—they show that medical science, instead of being rich in remedies, is poor. To amputate a limb is not to cure its disease, and to incarcerate the criminal is not to change him, nor to wipe out the blot occasioned to the body politic. What if the power employed to do evil had been employed to do well; if the skill of the pickpocket and the burglar, the keenness of the gambler, the courage and perseverance of evil-doers in general, were devoted to trade and commerce, to the arts and to science, to literature and to religion, what a vast accession would be secured to our working power! Hitherto evil-doing—we blush as we say it, but it is true—evil-doing has, for self-sacrifice, endurance, victory over obstacles, defiance of danger, and recovery of energy after defeat, surpassed completely well-doing.

And here observe, that "a child left to himself" does not leave others to themselves. As soon as he can learn, he can teach, and when he can teach, he gathers pupils in his own evil ways. My brethren, the sanitary condition of towns and cities in our country has justly attracted a large amount of attention. But let us ever keep the *moral* state of our population prominent. It is quite true that filth and disease are promotives of vice; and that health and cleanliness may do much to advance morality and religion. But the whole truth is, that between physical and moral degradation there is a reciprocal influence, and an essential connection, and that the removal of the one is to a large extent the putting away of the other. The right definition of their relations will perhaps be this—that want of cleanliness and disease aggravate crime, while crime directly causes disease and uncleanliness. Now, we ask, What is fever compared with sin, or the effluvia arising from defective drainage to the influence even of an immoral child? Every child

"left to himself" is the source of a miasma, which penetrates to the spirit, infects the moral nature, and whose accursed influence may abide for ever and for ever. Give us drainage and ventilation, but before this give us godly education. Clear your streets of rabid dogs and over-driven cattle, but be consistent, and remove from the streets to the school children whose hands are full of mischief, and whose feet run to do evil—children who are left to themselves.

In a country like this, where children are left to themselves, there is guilty neglect somewhere; shame must be upon the mother and father, shame may be upon neighbours and citizens, shame may be upon the ministers and churches of Christ. It may not in every case be easy, it may not in all instances be right, to fix the blame; but there is blame somewhere. Until we have spent our last available penny, until we have consecrated our last spare hour, until we have used up all remaining energy, until we have sacrificed all that can be devoted, engaged in every work, and executed every device for the instruction and education of these children, their neglected state involves us all in guilt. It seems to contradict the belief of Christians in their own creed, to stamp us with hypocrisy, when we say "Thy kingdom come," and to charge home upon us an indifference and cruelty which go far to invalidate our claim to personal piety. Horses, pet dogs, favourite cats and birds, are receiving, at this hour, attentions that have never been given to neglected children, even by persons who profess an enlarged benevolence, and who claim to be the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"A child left to himself," then, grows up a mere animal, and becomes unsocial, immoral, irreligious. He is led into fierce and successful temptation, and becomes himself a tempter; he is active in evil-doing, is a loss, and yet an injury to society—and where he might be trained aright, he brands with shame those who have neglected to bring him up in "the way in which he should go." Christian men, so far as you can help it, let no child in Great Britain be "left to himself." What if God were to leave you! He might leave you. He might say, "Conscience, cease to whisper and to warn—leave that man alone." He might say to memory, "Fail him, as respects all good things—leave him alone." He might say to religious knowledge, "Depart from him—leave him alone. Providence, be dumb to him—leave him alone. My creation, suggest nothing to him that is religious and divine—leave him alone. Holy Scripture, be sealed to him—leave him alone. Ministers of Christ, cease to pray for him and to speak to him—leave him alone. Religious ordinances, be no more attractive—leave him alone. Godly men and women, withdraw from him—leave him alone. My Spirit, depart from him, I have darkened my countenance with respect to him—leave him alone." God might do this—what if he were to do it! What if he were to take his Holy Spirit from us, and to leave us to our own selves, as perhaps we have left neglected children to themselves? What would become of us? Brethren, by the kindness you show to suffering irrational animals, by the sympathies of our common human nature, by your own obligations to a good father and a good mother, or by the void which orphanage or parental neglect still leaves aching within you; by what Christian schools have done for you; by the guilt and iniquity into which neglected children fall, and the awful

dangers to which they are exposed; by the possibility of arresting mischief long since caused; by the success which everywhere grows out of honest efforts in training the young; by the certain sympathy of Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;" by the promise of an Almighty and All-merciful Father—let us this evening provoke each other to continue in the good work—steadfast and unmoveable—of providing means of education for all the children of our native land.

PETTITBOURG JUVENILE COLONY.

This colony is an institution similar to our Refuges, for the reformation of juvenile offenders, and for the instruction of vagabond boys found without any parental care wandering about the streets of Paris. It is supported solely by voluntary contributions. The boys are taught all kinds of out-door and in-door work, and have regular seasons of recreation. There are, at present, thirty boys in this colony.

As a means of self-discipline, it appears that when any one commits a fault requiring grave punishment, the whole of the boys are assembled, as a sort of council, to deliberate and decide on the kind of punishment to be inflicted. It usually consists of imprisonment in a cell for a number of days, and, of course, no participation in the recreations of the community. There is a peculiarity in the discipline which, from its novelty as well as from its success, deserves to be mentioned. After the sentence passed by his comrades has been approved by the governor, he then puts this question—"Will any one consent to become the patron of this offender—that is, to take his place now, and suffer in his place and stead while he goes free?" It rarely happens that some one does not step forward and consent to ransom the offender by undergoing his punishment for him. The offender, in that case, is obliged to act as porter in carrying to his substitute in the dungeon his allowance of bread and water during all the time of his captivity. The result has been to soften the obdurate hearts of many boys who felt keenly when they saw another lad willingly enduring what they have deserved to suffer.

A remarkable example may be fitly reported. A boy whose violent temper and bad conduct had procured his expulsion from several schools in Paris, and who was in a fair way of becoming an outlaw, was received into the institution. For a time the novelty of the scene, the influence of the reformed lads, and the occupations, seemed to have subdued his temper. But his evil propensity being only latent, not destroyed, soon showed itself by his drawing a knife on a boy with whom he had quarrelled, and stabbing him in the breast. The wound was severe, but not mortal; and while the bleeding boy was carried to the hospital, the rest of the inmates were summoned to decide on the fate of the criminal. They agreed at once in a sentence of instant expulsion, without hope of re-admission. The director opposed this, and showed them that such a course would end in this poor desperate boy being sent to the scaffold or to the galleys. He bade them think of another punishment. They fixed upon imprisonment for an unlimited period. The usual question was put, but no patron offered himself, and the culprit was marched off to prison. After some days, the director

reminded the boys of the case, and on a repetition of the call, "Will no one become the patron of this wretched boy?" a voice was heard, "I will!" The astonished boys looked around, and saw coming forward the very youth who had been wounded, and who had just been discharged from the sick ward. He went to the dungeon and took the place of the would-be murderer—for had his physical strength been equal to his passion, the blow must have been fatal. His heart still remained so obdurate that hope of repentance was almost given up. After he had for some time carried the pittance of food to his generous patron, and seen him, still pale and feeble from the effects of his wound, suffering for him deprivation of light, and liberty, and joy, his stout heart gave up, and he cast himself at the feet of the director, confessing and bewailing, with bitter tears, the wickedness of his heart, and expressing the resolution to lead a different life. From that time the boy became changed both in outward aspect and in life; and thus Christian love again conquered a wild human soul.

Whether this principle of vicarious punishment could be introduced into British Refuges we leave for the consideration of their managers. But we cannot but think that the plan deserves a trial; for we are loath to believe that the plan would break down through English being less noble than French boys. Nor, novel as is the application of the plan of vicarious penalties to the reclamation of outcasts, is it at all a new one as regards humanity at large. Ancient history proffers many cases which attest the truth that this principle has its roots in man's mental constitution; whilst the Scriptures, by precept and example, give it the sanction of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Scripturally based, we have every reason for applying it in the discipline of those homeless or outcast boys and girls who form the staple of our Refuges, and who, if tamed at all, it must be as the fruitage of Christian tenderness.

HONOUR AMONG THIEVES.

In the "Memoirs of Peter Bedford," a member of the Society of Friends, long known as the Spitalfields Philanthropist, the following striking illustration of the power of kindness occurs:—

A member of the Society of Friends having just married, went off with his bride to spend the honeymoon in Yorkshire. They did not travel by railway at that time, for there was none, and on their return they came back by the Eastern Counties. On reaching London, and driving in their own carriage through Brick Lane in the dusk of the evening, there was a stoppage. Whilst they were thus waiting for other vehicles to move on, some one rapped at their carriage-door and said, "Sir, your portmanteau is gone. The man that stole it has gone down that street." The bridegroom jumped out and went in search of the portmanteau, leaving the bride somewhat alarmed for her personal safety. He had, however, to abandon the pursuit. The loss of the portmanteau was the more annoying as it contained the bridal apparel, which would be required on their arrival home, where their relatives were expected to welcome them.

One of my friends called on me that evening at six o'clock, and said,

"Peter Bedford, we are in trouble." "What is the matter, Edwin?" He then repeated that the newly-married party were in embarrassment, and that he had come to see if I could help them to recover their stolen property. I promised my assistance so far as practicable. In making this promise, I had Bill Horne in my mind; for I had learnt that his business was to cut the straps of portmanteaus with a sort of weeding-hook.

We sallied forth, and went down Spitalfields together. I inquired of a woman where Bill lived. She said she could not tell me the name of the place, but she could show me where it was. She then took us into Wentworth Street, and pointed out the house to us. The most disgusting female figure that ever I saw in my life filled the doorway. However, I went up to her and said, "Is Bill Horne within?" "No, sir, he is not." "Where is he? Is he nigh at hand?" "Yes, sir." "Then let him know I want to see him on special business; ask him to come to my house." I inquired of the woman if she knew me, and she replied, "Oh, yes; I know who you are—Mr. Bedford."

We then returned to my house, and soon afterwards Bill made his appearance. I at once challenged him for his reason for stealing a portmanteau from the carriage of one of my friends. "Oh, sir, I didn't do it!" I replied, half in earnest, half in jest, that he should have prevented any one from taking such a liberty with a friend of mine. "But, sir, I did not know it was a friend of yours. It was done by another young man." "Well," I said, "never mind about who did it. We must have the portmanteau and its contents." "No, sir, you can't. It's 'cracked.'" He meant that it was broken up; for as portmanteaus can be identified, thieves break them up immediately. "Well, then," said I, "we must have the contents, and they must be here by ten o'clock this evening." "I don't think it can be done, sir." "It *must* be done."

So the bridegroom and Edward Harris waited at my house till the evening. By-and-bye the bell rang, and some one was let in. I went into the room: there was not only Bill Horne, but another young man with him. Seeing they had come without the missing property, I exclaimed, "How is it you have not brought these things?" "The police won't let us," they replied, "but you shall have them to-morrow morning by eight o'clock. We really can't bring them to-night." Bill then began to enumerate several articles it contained—as a watch, silk stockings, &c.

In the morning, about eight or nine o'clock, Horne brought the things, and was shown into my parlour. Edward Harris and William Tindall were with me there. As soon as Bill Horne saw the latter, he looked at me, and said, "Oh, sir, is it all right?" For his heart failed him, and he thought I had a police-officer with me. I told him it was all right, he might depend upon it. He answered, "Well, sir, I could trust my life in your hand."

Such was the effect of kindness. Well, the things were all brought except a few trifles; they had been divided amongst several parties, and they could not collect all together again. I didn't give them a shilling for their trouble, and don't know whether they expected anything or not. I said nothing about it.

On two other occasions proof of the existence of similar feelings was thus displayed:—

One evening Mr. Bedford was walking down Bishopsgate Street, and two young thieves observing him, one of them exclaimed to the other, "There goes a gentleman with a good watch, I'll be bound, and I'll have it." "No, you shan't," replied his comrade; "that won't do; you don't know who it is. It's Mr. Bedford." And explaining that he was the friend of thieves and others, he promptly prevented the proposed stealing of the watch.

On another occasion, in the same neighbourhood, a Quaker gentleman lost a gold watch through the dexterity of the thieves. As in other similar instances, application was made to Mr. Bedford, to see if restitution could be obtained through his influence. The request was complied with, and success attended the effort. But some of Mr. Bedford's brethren of the stricter sort felt a little scandalised at the idea of one of their society being on such intimate and familiarly influential terms with disreputable characters. However, he good-humouredly smiled away their remonstrances, and continued his active exertions in this direction as before. In fact, he thereby merely imitated his Divine Master, of whom it was scoffingly said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

A RAGGED BOY'S PROGRESS DESCRIBED BY HIMSELF.

A poor lad was early cast on the world an entire orphan, and when sent to the Great Queen Street Refuge he was without a friend to help him. The Chaplain of a prison sent him there, for the poor boy had been tempted to steal some food to supply his necessities, and was apprehended and sent to jail for a short time. He appeared a dull boy, and by no means promising; but it was felt that he could not be turned into the street again, either to steal or to starve, so it was resolved to give him another chance. A more quiet, steady, industrious boy never came into the Refuge. He found here what he wanted—a home—and therefore appreciated the kindness shown him. He was a bright example among his companions, and after remaining in the Refuge some time he was sent abroad. He has kept up a constant correspondence with the Secretary and Superintendent, and below we give the last letter which was received about the beginning of last month. The letter is given just as it was written by the lad. For, notwithstanding all the errors in spelling and grammar, his letters are greatly valued as a proof of the love he still has for his friends at the Refuge:—

"June 30th, 1866.

"Dear Sir,—With a thankful heart I now take pen in hand to address these few lines to you, oping to find you in good health, with strong faith serving the Lord. Since I wrote to you last I have ad many things to thank the Lord for. You will remember that in my last letter I spake of the bad times, and the bad state the Coloney was in through the war, and the bad manegment of the merchentes, &c. But I am now hapy to inform you that the war is now settled, which you perceive by the nuespapers I have sent you of late. Business is a little better, and that verry little; you will also remember that I spake of my having but 2 days work a week, and that I

was doing verry sadly, but I now rejoise to tell you that the Lord as been pleased to helpe me out of this. Yes, dear sir, I can prase the Lord for is goodness towardes me,—for a few minutes I will tell you wat the Lord as don for me: some 3 months ago the thought came into my head that I would go to ——, which is 60 miles from ——, not that I expected to get work there, but jest to see my shipmates and spend 2 or 3 days, and com back to ——, howhever I manedge to reach —— in 2 days an 2 nights, but not without 2 good soakens with the have raines, which falls prutty evey in this part of the world wen it dos com. Well, I found out the principle frend that I wanted to see, which was non other than a Mrs. ——, a young lady which I tooek a great liken to on board the vesel, so you may guess that after not seeing her 3 years I was glade to meete with her then, but I am sorry to tell you I met with sad disappointment, by finding out that thay expect to go home soon, so that is her mother, brother, and sisters thay all entend to go home becaurse the times are so bad in ——, but I trust that things whill turn for the best, as I am truly fond of the sade Mrs. ——; but I fear I am trubling you to much, so I will go on with my adventures. Instead of my stoping 3 days in —— I stayd 3 weeks. I will tell you how that was. I appened to be a prutty good han at making leather hats, a hat which is cheafley worn in this Coloney by the working clarses of men. I made 2 leather hats for the brothers of the young lady whor I have referred to above; thrugh making the 2 leather hats I gat so many orders that I made my miend up to stay for some time in ——, but I could not do this without going down to —— to see after some money and get my tools, &c. I borrawed a horse and went to ——, which tooek me one day, you may gess that I was prutty stif with 16 houres ride. I than let my horse have 2 days rest, and then came back to ——, and went out with hats that I ad orderd. Since I have been in this city, for so it is called, I have found some good frends, who advised me to start in busness for myself. I thought over the advice, untill I made my mind up to looek out for a shop suterbile for my perpes, which I was luckey to find very soon, it is a nice little shop and 3 rooms, one at the back of the shop and 2 up stears, the rent is £4 per month, and I rejoice to tell you that I opened the same on the 25 of this month with £20 worth of saddlery of my hone and £100 worth to sell on commission, so I have a nice little stock. I have now been 5 dayes. You whill see my advetesment in the paper I have sent you, it is marked. I would not forgit to remark that I am commencing busness in very bad times, as busness is very quite, but I trust in God to help me, for I know that if it be His will that I should prosper I beleve it will be so, if not I am wiling to submit; all that I can promise, that it shall not be my fault if I do not git on, I rejoice to tell you that I am still a totle abstaner from all strong drinks, which I thank the Lord for, for it is not in my hone strength that I thus deny myself, but by grace am I saved. O may everry boy or young man that leaves yor schools sine the pleage befor he comes to this or any other Colony, and may I beg of you to empres upon their mind not to sine the plege mearly to please you are any one that should asked them to sine, but to sine for their hone comfart and benerfit, with a determination of keeping it. I am sorry to tell you that Lock and Robenson broek the plege soon after thay got out here, and I would further say, that I have every reeson to beleve that if thay ad

not broken the plege thay would have been in differen circumstances to what they have been. I would jest state that shud it pleas God to prosper me in my new undertaking, that I think sending for a boy from the school, pleas let know on what turms you can send one out for. I see by my watch that my time is nerly gone, so I must conclue herging you to answer thes few lines as soon as it will be convenient for you. I give my love to Mr. & Mrs. Wood, Mr. Weare, Mrs. Varne and all inquiring frends, but before I say good by, I would beg of you to favour me with your portraite, nay I would call it more than a favour, I shall feel it a honer to have the likness of one who has been the meens of my beeing what I am, please send it; if I can spear the money this month I will have my likness takin an send you one if I am speard. So good by for the present, as I still remain yours ever grateful survent."

OLD TEACHERS' AND SCHOLARS' MEETING.

THE senior scholars of the Hoxton Ragged School, feeling that they had derived much personal benefit through their attendance, were desirous of gathering all those who formerly were in the school, but had, since leaving it, given up all religious connections, living a life of sin and indifference. In company with the teachers, at considerable trouble, they hunted up all who could be found, and invited them to an Old Scholars' Meeting. Tuesday, November 6th, was fixed for the reunion, and on that day the school presented a very unusual appearance. The lower school, in which tea was provided, free of charge, was not only filled, but really crammed, with a very mixed company of the former and present teachers, and also the former scholars, as well as those still in the school above sixteen years of age. Among them were not a few costermongers, street fish-salesmen, and "roughs," such as Ragged School friends delight to meet with. After tea they were entertained by the singing of favourite old Sunday-school hymns, while two or three dozen late-comers occupied their places at the tea-tables. Tea being all over, Mr. G. W. Ansell (the founder of the school) took the chair, and, after the meeting had been opened by prayer, gave a detailed account of his early labours in Hoxton; and such a statement of difficulty, ill-treatment, discouragement, but, withal, of trust and Divine interposition, belongs not to one man out of a thousand even of our most zealous workers in the cause of Christ to relate. He commenced teaching in an open field among the many outcasts of society, and had been the victim of opposition, fraud, and theft. Once he was held over a staircase, the men threatening to throw him down. He had many of his scholars taken from the class to prison, and had been much pressed for money to pay for the building; but, after having laboured twenty-one years in the work, he could look back with pleasure, having witnessed many taught in the schools die in a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection, and known others, who still live, adorning the doctrine of God the Saviour. One former scholar is engaged in preaching the Gospel in Australia.

Among the speakers were the following:—Mr. Taylor (late teacher) said, godliness was profitable in all things. He had proved it so in all the heavy troubles of his life. He was left a poor orphan, and obtained for himself an

errand-boy's place; and since he had committed his way to God, he, true to his promise, had taken care of him. He assured the old scholars that he could practically teach—

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live."

Mr. Piper (late teacher) said, that having removed to South Hackney, he had considered himself justified in resigning his position; but such was the influence of again meeting those to whom God had blessed his past labour, that, since the tea, he had, notwithstanding the distance, resolved again to work amongst them, and would return as soon as they could find him a class. He was glad to find so many of his old scholars had become teachers; and he gave such some good advice respecting the discharge of their new responsibilities. Mr. J. Prickett, one of the most useful teachers, with great emotion, in referring to his early life, said he used to clean boots every Sabbath morning on the Kingsland Road Bridge, and when sixteen years of age could neither read nor write. Mr. W. Black, an occasional teacher, said he was enticed into the school when a ragged little urchin with dirty shirt-sleeves, minus a coat, and his toes all out of his boots. He became the ring-leader in school riots, until God blessed a teacher's words to his soul's conversion.

Mr. J. Aldridge (Sunday evening superintendent) said that, from his personal knowledge of the old female scholars, he was quite sure that, had their testimony been called for, it would have been equally encouraging as that to which they had listened. He considered that a poor girl had more temptation in her path of life than a boy. Some of the old female scholars had long been teachers, and he could testify to the piety among them. He then addressed the old scholars who had lived without God, contrasting their temporal position with those who early in life had sought his favour. He hoped the meeting would mark a new era in their history, and that in the future they would live to the glory of God.

During the evening a time-piece was presented to the Secretary (Mr. Watson) by the teachers and senior scholars, as a token of their affectionate regard.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman brought the meeting to a close, it having proved one of much encouragement to the teachers, and, it is to be hoped, of blessing to the scholars. We are glad to learn that it is the intention of the teachers of Hoxton to hold these meetings annually.

The Poet's Corner.

WORK AND PRAY.

BRETHREN, we are called to labour
In our blessed Master's name—
Called the precious seed to scatter,
Fearless of reproach or shame.

See, the fields are white to harvest,
But the labourers still are few;
Jesus calls on you, my brethren,
Something in his name to do.

Look around you—souls are living
Heedless of the coming day,
When the things of time shall vanish,
And for ever pass away.

Why not warn them of the future—
Of the place where lost ones dwell—
Of the dreadful night of darkness
Christless souls shall spend in hell?

Why not tell them of the Saviour,
Who was nailed upon the tree,
That, by tasting death for sinners,
They might be from death set free?

Tell the worldling and the careless
Of your Saviour's boundless love;
Tell the outcast and the wanderer
Of a home with Christ above.

Let the love of Christ constrain you
To proclaim the joyful sound
Of salvation for the guilty,
And a ransom for the bound.

Ask your Lord for grace to labour;
He will give you all you need:
Seek the Spirit's help and guidance,
Earnestly with souls to plead.

Let your seed by prayer be watered,
Ere you strew it o'er the ground;
With your Father's blessing on it,
It shall yet with fruit abound.

While our Lord delays his coming,
Do not idle time away;
O my brethren, be not weary;
Now's the time to work and pray.

R. K.

The Editor's Note-book.

A YEAR'S CRIME.

THE judicial statistics for England and Wales for the year 1865 have recently been published. By that report it appears that the total number of murders was 135, being 1 in excess of the previous year. There were 54 attempts to murder, as compared with 40 in the preceding year; and 279 cases of man-

slaughter, as compared with 214 in the previous year. The cases of stabbing, shooting at, &c., numbered 769, showing a decrease of 4 from the previous year. There were 232 cases of concealment of birth in 1864-5, being less by 3 than in the preceding year. Of these, 88 were in the metropolitan police district, and none in the city of London. The burglaries reported were 2,615, being an increase of 24 on the previous return; highway robberies, &c., 716; arson, 470; and attempted suicide, 787. The number of proved offences against the person was 2,586; offences against property, with violence, 5,160; malicious offences against property, 669; other offences, 43,298. The cases of stealing and attempting to steal numbered 44,908; the assault cases 98,776. The total number of persons proceeded against exceeded by 12,000 the number of the previous year. The number of commitments in criminal proceedings for the year was 19,614, being very slightly in excess of the previous year. Of the 20 persons sentenced to death in 1865, 8 were left for execution; 1 committed suicide in prison; in 8 the sentences were commuted to penal servitude for life, in 1 commuted to a year's imprisonment, in 1 the convict was sent to Broadmoor as insane, in 1 (an Italian) a pardon was granted on condition of his leaving the country, and in 1 a free pardon was granted, the verdict not being considered satisfactory. The number of executions last year was 7, compared with 19 in 1864 and 22 in 1863. The number sentenced to death in 1865 is the lowest on record, and contrasts strongly with the number forty years before—the number in 1825 being 1,036.

The cost of proceedings on indictment paid by the Treasury last year was £134,901 17s. 10d., or an average of £7 18s. 10d. for each case. The total cost of the prisons last year was £558 757 14s. 3d., compared with £433,045 for the previous year. The total amount paid for Reformatories was £18,505 15s. 1d., and for Industrial Schools £15,493 15s. 4d. The total charge of criminals in the lunatic asylums was £49,311 11s. 10d.

SOCIAL STATUS OF CRIMINALS.

Excluding from the reckoning the debtors and military prisoners, 129,527 persons were in the county and borough prisons of England and Wales in some part of the year, those who were in gaol more than once in the year being counted each time. The prison records give but a meagre description of this army of bad subjects. Of the 95,040 men, above 50,000 are vaguely styled "labourers," and 6,000 more of "no occupation;" but others are more distinctly designated. 23,249 are classed as mechanics and skilled workmen; 4,322 as factory workers; 4,598 soldiers and sailors; 2,538 shopkeepers and dealers; 1,532 shopmen and clerks; 251 in professional employments; 1,164 domestic servants. Of the 34,487 females, 16,800 are described as of "no occupation;" 9,176 charwomen, needle-women, and labourers; 468 domestic servants; 2,596 factory workers; 1,162 shopkeepers and dealers; 68 shopwomen; 872 skilled workers. 15 in every 100 of these prisoners were natives of Ireland, and yet in the population generally only 3 in 100 are natives of Ireland. Women, it will be observed, are not very much more than a third of the men in number; but that women, when criminal, are worse than men, seems to be indicated by the fact that 42 in every 100 of the women in gaol in the year had been in prison before, but only 32 in 100 of the men. 1,173 of the men, but no less than 2,773 of the women, had been in prison above 10 times before. 8,459 of the prisoners of the year—more than 6 in every 100—were under 16 years of age; and doubtless many of the older criminals commenced their career of crime in *childhood*.

The ignorance of the class of the population from which the mass of these prisoners came is shown by the return relating to instruction. Thus 35 in 104—more than 1 in 3—could not read or write, and 60 more only imperfectly,

leaving only 5 in 100 able to read or write well. But in convict prisons, where the more skilled prisoners are to be found, the proportion who come in entirely ignorant of reading and writing is much smaller, and very few leave without having been secularly instructed.

A curious return has been compiled with great care relating to the 512 convicts in custody in Pentonville Prison at the end of 1863; 370 of them, nearly three-fourths, were single men, but 65 of that number lived in concubinage. Of their previous moral and religious status we learn that 302, 3 in 5, were sober men, and 42 of the rest only occasionally drunken.

NOMINAL CREED OF CRIMINALS.

A Parliamentary return just issued gives the nominal creed of the prisoners in certain London prisons. Of 5,420 prisoners committed to the House of Correction, Westminster, in 1665, 3,113 are described as being of the Church of England; 2,247 Roman Catholics; 21 Wesleyans; 15 Presbyterians; 16 Baptists; 2 Independents; and 6 Jews. The number in custody on the 15th of November last was 622, of whom 416 were Church of England, 201 Roman Catholics, 1 Wesleyan, 2 Presbyterians, 1 Independent, and 1 Jew. At Coldbath Fields there were committed during the year 1865, 7,645 nominal members of the Church of England, 2,390 Roman Catholics, 41 Jews, 35 Presbyterians, 21 Mahometans, 12 Baptists, 23 Wesleyans, 5 Independents, 3 Lutherans, and 1 Unitarian. Of 1,616 prisoners on the 20th of last month, 321 were Roman Catholics. At the Middlesex House of Detention, Clerkenwell, the prisoners last year were divided into 6,686 Church of England, 1,957 Roman Catholics, 62 "Dissenters," 16 Presbyterians, 45 Jews, and 11 "of other denominations." On the 15th of last December there were 129 members of the Church of England, and 56 Roman Catholics, at the City of London Prison, Holloway. There were committed during 1865, 1,315 Church of England, 613 Roman Catholics, 22 Jews, 13 Presbyterians, 13 Wesleyans, 6 Baptists, 2 Independents, and 3 of "no religion." On the 15th of last November the 283 prisoners in confinement at this prison consisted of 237 Church of England, 32 Roman Catholics, 5 Jews, 1 Presbyterian, 4 Wesleyans, 2 Baptists, and 2 of "no religion."

The item "no religion" would probably be the truest description of the creed of most, seeing that they regarded neither the laws of God nor of man.

Our Library Table.

Taking Tales for Cottage Homes. London: Griffith & Farran.

THIS serial is edited by Mr. W. H. G. Kingston, the well-known writer for boys. The object of the projectors is thus stated—"to supply the cottagers and humbler classes of England, whose knowledge of reading, and whose vocabularies, are limited, with substantial books in clear large type, composed of words the meaning of which they understand, sentences which the eye can take in with ease, ideas suited to their comprehension, on subjects likely to excite their interest, so that they may obtain amusement and wholesome instruction without the labour which a large number of the works at present put into their

hands demands." The first number fully carries out this aim. Unlike the "sensational" tales—some of them mis-called "religious"—which disgrace our literature, the incidents neither revolt the taste, nor minister to morbid self-love. The whole tale, in fact, is *avowedly* an illustration of the Bible doctrine, that the best way of avenging personal injuries is to pray for and help our enemy in the hour of his need. Not written in that stilted style which some novices mistake for poetry, the terse Saxon terms employed are level to the capacity of the humblest. Thinking that such a monthly visitor at our cottage homes would be a welcome guest, we wish this undertaking every success.

The British Workman and *Band of Hope Review for* 1866. London: Partridge.

Both these serials, under the same editor, keep up their reputation for solid matter, clothed in language within the grasp of the youngest. The aim of every line seems to be to teach the great truth the poor are so slow to learn—that self-help is better than human crutches. The illustrations, as usual, are numerous and excellent; and no expense seems to be spared in "getting up" these valuable periodicals. We do not wonder that they are great favourites in all quarters; for we know that they have brought the Gospel, with all its peace, into many once desolate homes.

The Children's Gallery.

THE FIREWOOD SELLER.

I thought of Elijah in the wilderness the other night. (See 1 Kings xix. 4). I saw the great prophet again; for human nature is the same in a great prophet as in a little hungry boy.

At nine o'clock on Saturday evening I heard pitiful subdued sobs and crying outside. I know the kind of thing that means some one fairly beaten. Not angry, not bitter,—smashed! I opened the front door, and found a little boy, ten years old, sitting on the steps crying. I asked him what was the matter. I see the thin, white, hungry, dirty little face. He would have slunk away if he could. He plainly thought his case beyond all mending. But I brought him in, and set him in a chair in the lobby; and he told his story.

He had a large bundle of sticks in a ragged sack—firewood. At three o'clock that afternoon he had come out to sell them. His mother was a poor washerwoman, in the most wretched part of the town. His father was killed a fortnight ago by falling from a scaffold. He had walked a long way through the streets—about three miles. He had tried all the afternoon to sell his sticks, but had sold only a halfpennyworth. He was lame, poor little man, from a sore leg, yet managed to carry his heavy load; but at last, going down some poor area stair in the dark, he fell down a whole flight of steps, and hurt his sore leg so that he could not walk, and also got a great cut on his forehead. He had got just the halfpenny for his poor mother. He had been going about with his burden for six hours, with nothing to eat. But he turned his face homewards, carrying his sticks, and struggled on about a quarter of a mile, and then he broke down. He could go no farther. In the dark cold night he sat down and cried. It was not the crying of one who hoped to attract attention,—it was the crying of flat despair.

The first thing I did (which did not take a moment) was to thank God that my door-steps had been his juniper-tree. Then I remembered that the first thing God did when Elijah broke down, was to give him something to eat. Yes, it is a

great thing to keep up physical nature. And the little man had had no food since three o'clock till nine. So there came, brought by kind hands (not mine), several great slices of bread and butter (jam even was added), and a cup of warm tea. The spirit began to come a little into the child, and he thought he could manage to get home if we would let him leave his sticks till Monday. We asked him what he would have got for his sticks if he had sold them all. Ninepence. Under the circumstances, it appeared that a profit of a hundred per cent. was not exorbitant; so he received eighteenpence, which he stowed away somewhere in his rags, and the sack went away, and returned with all the sticks emptied out. Finally, an old grey coat of rough tweed came, and was put upon the little boy, and carefully buttoned, forming a capital greatcoat. And forasmuch as his trousers were most unusually ragged, a pair of such appeared, and being wrapped up, were placed in the sack, along with a good deal of bread and butter. How the heart of the child had by this time revived! He thought he could go home nicely. And having very briefly asked the Father of the fatherless to care for him, I beheld him limp away in the dark.—*Autumn Holidays of a Country Parson.*

Correspondence.

AN INFANT'S DEATH-BED.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Some months ago the writer was addressing about a hundred poor people, who meet every Sunday evening to worship God in their *own* "Ragged Church." The gathering consists of those who are too ill-clad to attend any stated place of worship. Many who attend bring their children with them, as otherwise they must stay at home. The psalmody is often joined by these little ones, and the service, of course, sometimes interrupted by their cries. The subject for this particular evening was the importance of prayer, especially *specific* prayer. The speaker illustrated his subject by an anecdote of a little child who was fond of cheese. Her mother had trained her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As she was fond of cheese, when this little child said the Lord's Prayer she always added, after "Give us this day our daily bread," "*and a little bit of cheese.*" By this simple tale the writer endeavoured to show that all real prayer was just asking for what we felt we needed.

One little child present, under four years of age, was deeply impressed with this anecdote. God had appointed her to death. She was one of a family of fifteen, but God had already taken eleven. The hymn sung at the close of the service was, "Rock of Ages." This, also, under the teaching of the Spirit, impressed the infant mind. She went home to die. On the following and subsequent days, in saying the Lord's Prayer, she added, after "daily bread," "*and a little bit of butter;*" for butter was a rare luxury in that poor home. Her mother told her that when our Lord taught his disciples to use that prayer, "bread included all these things." "Then," she replied, "why did Mr. B—— tell us about the little girl that asked for cheese?" God only permitted her to bloom here. He took her to blossom in the sunny table-land of the new Jerusalem.

"Scarce had she touched life's chilling breeze,
Or heard its restless billows play."

She continued to offer her little prayer for a "little bit of butter," and inquired of her mother, "what she must do to be saved." Her mother replied, "Do you not recollect what Mr. B—— told us about believing on the Lord Jesus Christ; and how Christ said, when on earth, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven'?" She could not read, but asked her mother continually to read to her, and sing with her what she called Mr. B——'s hymn—"Rock of Ages." She knew it was seventy-eight in the little hymn-book we use. To that she continually turned; and, after her death, her mother found the little book under her pillow, very dirty at that page. Although unable to read, she had learnt the figures, and constantly looked at this hymn, and, in her heart, felt its power.

Truly we may say this is one of God's chosen ones, gathered early into his garner through the instrumentality of Ragged School teaching. We rejoice to think that she is now "where they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." And surely this sketch of an infant's death-bed gives this fresh encouragement to teachers—"In the *morning* sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand."

I am, &c.,

T. B.

Notices of Meetings.

SOUTHAMPTON.

THE annual meeting of this institution was recently held at the Carlton Hall. The chair was taken by Mr. Edward Palk, J.P., who was supported by the Mayor, who waived his right to preside, stating that Mr. Palk was so intimately bound up with the undertaking that he was the better entitled to the honour. The report said that 1,239 have been under instruction since the opening of the school. The average daily attendance has been 76. In the Sunday-school the average attendance has considerably fallen, and now numbers only 35. This is accounted for in some measure by the children attending Sunday-schools in connection with some place of worship, but the Committee, being well aware that very many boys attend no Sunday-school, are anxious to organize some agency for visiting the children at their homes, to induce an improvement in this respect. The evening school, formerly held twice a-week, has entirely ceased, solely from the want of teachers. They are, therefore, compelled to beg the services of any gentleman who would be willing to lend a helping hand in forming an evening class, and thus supplementing the good of the day school by a boon to those engaged during the day. The industrial department is in a very flourishing condition. The master is able, by means of this valuable department, to ascertain the character of those submitted to his charge; and as wood-chopping, tailoring, and paper-bag making indicate the strength and mechanical skill of the worker, he is, consequently, able to recommend boys who retain their situations with credit to themselves and profit to their employers. The great demand for firewood has permanently provided for many who would otherwise have been out of employment, and left to pursue their own course of vice and immorality. The tailoring department has given very little employment this year, and the Committee earnestly solicit donations of left-off clothing, which the boys convert into garments suitable for themselves, and enabling them to present a creditable appearance. The dormitories during the

past year have given shelter and accommodation to 36 boys, and in many instances have proved the means of rescuing several lads from the temptations of street wandering. During the year, 3,478 meals have been supplied at a cost of £43 10s. 4d., the meals consisting, for the most part, of 1lb. of bread and butter and a mug of coffee; but if the boys work for a day they receive a dinner of meat. The recipients of these meals are lads taken into the dormitory, and also those taken from the day school to assist in paper-bag making, &c., and are thus paid in kind instead of money. The Committee cannot close their report without referring to the loss the school has sustained by the lamented death of Mrs. Hatch, whose devoted and untiring energy very much contributed to the success of the schools, as she possessed a great love for the work of winning these little ones to the Saviour, and evidenced it by a kind and Christian demeanour towards all in whom she desired to kindle the same emotions in this labour of love. The Committee trust that some other lady will be found to emulate her example.

The balance-sheet showed the receipts to have been £187 11s. 9½d., and the expenditure £209 10s. 3½d., leaving a balance due to the Treasurer of £21 18s. 6d. The meeting was addressed by the Mayor; Major-General Tryon; Messrs. G. S. Brinton, Oke, Prolan, and Westlake.

STRATFORD.

THE annual meeting of the friends of the Chapel Street Ragged School took place in the Working Men's Hall. The chair was taken by John Gurney Barclay, Esq., who said—I come among you this evening very much as a stranger, but not altogether as a stranger to the wants of the district. Many of us can remember Stratford twenty or twenty-five years ago—a very different place from what it is now. At that time the site of Hudson's Town would be in fields; and I recollect very well a pleasant-looking white house and gardens occupied the situation which is now filled by the works of the Great Eastern Railway Company. Angel Lane, which is now a busy street, was then what its name denotes, a country lane. At the present time we have teeming thousands upon that ground which was then fields; and for the most part it is occupied by men who are earning good wages, and not only able, but willing to a great extent, to afford to their children the necessary education to enable them to go forward in life. But with such a large population as has arisen all around, there must be a large proportion of a very different class who tread upon the heels of those above them. Now this is a class the offspring of misfortune, sickness, and death in families—and I may add vice—this is the class, I take it, that we are met here this evening to help. It is chiefly to this class, who cannot help themselves, that we are called upon to lend a helping hand. I think that there is no means by which this class can be assisted so easily or effectually as by the Ragged Schools. Without education these poor children cannot get forward in the world. They cannot help themselves; they have in many instances no parents, or have not known their parents; and it is our duty and privilege to lift them out of the street and place them in a position to help themselves. This can only be done in the way in which the Committee of this school have done it, by paid agency and assistance, as well as volunteer agents. The report said that the average daily attendance was, in the morning, 204; afternoon, 223; evening, 76. The attendance at the Sunday afternoon school is 60; evening school, 25 girls and 73 boys. During the past year 25 boys and 35 girls have left the school and obtained employment in the factories. Four boys have been appointed as signal boys or telegraph boys, and after three years' service had been appointed to more trustworthy situations on the railway. An attempt had been made to purchase the freehold of the school, now subject to a ground rent of £8, for which £200 would be required. The expenditure had been £122 11s. 8d., leaving a balance in hand of £7 14s. 10½d.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. Messrs. Delap, Forbes, and Stanton; and by Messrs. Freeman, Hilleary, and Nicholson.

Papers, Original and Selected.

POOR-RATES ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

MOST persons who are interested—and who are not?—in the education of the poorer classes, are aware that by a decision of the House of Lords on an appeal—"Jones and Others *v.* the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company"—all schools not held in or under a church or chapel, are rendered liable to pay poor-rates. This was the judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench on an appeal brought by the trustees of the British Orphan Asylum, against an assessment, to the extent of £1,000 per annum, made by the parish of Hackney. Mr. Justice Blackburn, on behalf of the judges, said "that the judges having attentively considered this case in connection with the decision of the House of Lords in the Mersey Dock case, are unanimously of opinion that all *buildings of a charitable or eleemosynary character* must be rated in future to the relief of the poor."

It is difficult to conceive how the question of such liability, on the part of dock and harbour boards, which are merely trading corporations, could affect institutions maintained by private benevolence solely for the public benefit. But, nevertheless, this case was only the forerunner of a change in a state of things which is alike indispensable on the grounds of ancient usage and of public policy. As regards the Mersey Docks, no exception can be taken to the opinions of the judges who were called in to assist the House of Lords, for they only upheld the well-established principle that there can be no valid rate unless the occupation be of value. The judgment of the House of Lords was based on the fact that the board had a beneficial occupation; for they occupied land as docks, and in virtue of that occupation received payments from shipping, "greatly in excess of what was necessary to maintain the docks." The directors, in fact, were mere traders; and as such, however beneficial to the local interests, they worked simply with a view to pecuniary profit. Now it is scarcely needful to say that Ragged Schools are not established to benefit the managers pecuniarily, but solely to save the outcast and the destitute from moral evils, and it may be from a career of crime.

Though, in consequence of this decision, we hear that some Reformatories pay poor-rates, it is doubtful whether they are legally liable. The decision in the case of Sheppard and Others *v.* the Churchwardens, &c., of Bradford (Common Pleas, May 2, 1864), seems to be conclusive on this point. Chief Justice Erle, in giving judgment for the appellants, said, "As I read the [Reformatory Schools'] Act, 17 & 18 Vic., c. 86, a Reformatory is a gaol for a particular class of offenders, and, therefore, as a gaol, is not liable to be rated." This judgment was concurred in by Justices Willes, Byles, and Keating, and has not, we believe, been upset. There is, therefore, we infer, no necessity for Reformatory managers to pay poor-rates.

A singular point in the judgment of the House of Lords may be noticed—namely, that if the school be so attached to a church or chapel as to form a part thereof, it is not liable to poor-rates: but, if it be held in a separate building, as the large majority of schools are, then the school is not freed from this liability. The principle of this subtle legal distinction we are at a loss to imagine. But such we understand to be the law as interpreted by the highest legal tribunals; and, as a result, the bulk of our Ragged Schools, held as they necessarily are in detached buildings, become, for the first time, liable to the payment of poor-rates.

Nor is the enforcement of such rates optional with the parish authorities. Some officials may be willing to exempt Ragged Schools from poor-rates; but their province is to enforce, and not to ignore or alter, the law. Nay, if they neglect their duty in this respect, they render themselves liable to heavy penalties for such breach of duty. Parochial officials are, however, usually too alert in the collection of parish rates from responsible persons to permit them not to assess our Schools, and thus to do something towards lightening the heavy poor-rates which now half ruin many poor householders.

We need scarcely say that this decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, based as it is on the law as expounded by the House of Lords, has caused much excitement in the circles favourable to Ragged Schools. Economically conducted as they are, too many live, so to speak, from "hand to mouth," and if the year's income is found equal to that of the expenditure, great is the gratulation of the managers. But such equalization of income and expenditure is the case of few Ragged Schools. Thus last year, out of eighty-three Institutions which reported their financial state to the

Ragged School Union, no less than forty-three were in debt, to the extent of £1,225. Nor do we expect, when the statistical papers of this year are returned, to find any diminution in this aggregate debt. For, from the length and extent of the commercial crisis of 1866, we have every reason to fear that our Ragged Schools will be found to have increased rather than diminished their respective debts. This we know, that never were appeals for increased pecuniary aid more numerous or more urgent than during the past winter. How then such Ragged Schools, crippled as they already are by debt, are to sustain—we will not say their efficiency, but—even their existence, if they are also to be saddled with poor-rates, we know not. But we fear that some of the neediest as respects means, though amongst the most valuable as regards works of mercy, will realize the truth of the old adage, "It is the last straw which breaks the camel's back." This especially applies to the Ragged Schools in the East of London. For in some parishes the poor-rates amount to five or six shillings in the pound; which, taking the yearly rent at £40, would materially add to their expenses, and possibly tend to their ultimate extinction.

Surely, however, Parliament will not permit this grievance to remain unredressed?—a grievance, be it remembered, not originated by any new statute, but solely based on a novel interpretation by the House of Lords of a law passed so far back as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Simple justice, indeed, demands that a law which has lain dormant for three hundred years; nay, the applicability of which to schools was not even suspected—should be at once repealed, or that an exemption-clause as respects public or free schools should be at once enacted.

If this remark applies to ordinary public and Sunday Schools, how much more is it applicable to Ragged Schools? For our friends not only devote time and energy, but dip deep into their purses, to prevent our poorer brethren from forming those habits which are a fertile source—nay, the very breeding-ground—of pauperism. Thus, by training the young to habits of industry, and by cultivating prudent forethought among adults by their special agencies of Parents' Meetings and Penny Banks, they have done more than the whole staff of the Poor Law Board to curtail the expenses incidental to hereditary pauperism. If we add to this the additional saving to the nation through the curtailment of the area of juvenile crime—we think that Ragged Schools have every claim not to be mulcted by that public they so essentially serve.

We seek not for public money to subsidize our Schools. Doing God's work, we have looked to Him alone for the funds needful to carry it on, and that with the same faith as we looked to Him for these agents, without which an abundant treasury would only be so much waste of gold. But we do think that, whilst we are doing a great work for the State without asking for a State subsidy, we ought at least to be exempt from State taxes—for such poor-rates really are,—based as they are upon legislative enactment, and superintended by a Government Board.

Hitherto, we regret to intimate, these and similar arguments have had no weight with those who, as trustees for their respective parishes, are naturally anxious to reduce the average house assessment for poor-rates. It seems, then, to us, that the time has arrived when a combined movement should be made by all who are interested in the education of the poor, in order that they may be at once relieved from what we cannot but consider as a *tax on voluntary labour*.

Some of our provincial friends are already stirring in this matter. Among other meetings, that held at Salford may be specially mentioned, as the speech of Mr. J. Cheetham, M.P.—an old Sunday School teacher—indicates the present position of the question. He said that he thought Mr. Hardy, the President of the Poor Law Board, seemed favourable to an alteration of the law, in order to exempt Sunday Schools from rating. He promised that during the recess the whole question should be taken into consideration. He (Mr. Cheetham) and Mr. Hibbert, M.P., had resolved to bring in a bill for the relief of Sunday Schools from rating, but they had no opportunity. They must now ask the President of the Poor Law Board whether he intended to move for a Special Committee or to introduce a bill. If he should decline to move in the matter, it would remain for consideration whether they two should bring in a bill, and test the opinion of the House. He thought there would be a strong disposition in it to exempt institutions in which every officer gave his time. A clergyman at Chelsea had written to him that the poor-rates upon his schoolroom amounted to £20, and were a serious interruption to the carrying on of their work.

London, usually slow to initiate any public movement, has also awoke to its duty. Hence, as the result of a meeting of the representatives of several charitable institutions held in May last, a Committee has been formed for the purpose of securing, by fresh legislative enactment, that exemption which has been enjoyed for

three hundred years. The Committee have addressed circulars on the subject to the managers of all the charities of the kingdom, with the view of obtaining that statistical information which will enable them to place a strong case before the Prime Minister, and subsequently before Parliament, whenever the question is brought forward in the House of Commons.

First and foremost amongst such exemptions from poor-rates ought to be our Ragged Schools. For, as Mr. Hibbert, M.P., well said at the Salford Conference, "If any class of school deserved exemption, it was the *Ragged School*. He had a strong feeling that all day schools also ought to be exempted. Because, really, such institutions were doing the work of the State, and endeavouring to bring up the children of the present generation so much better than those of former generations, that they might do away with the necessity of enlarging gaols and other criminal institutions. Gaols were exempted from rating, and therefore they had strong ground for asking that educational institutions should be exempted." And surely there is no flaw in this argument. For, if to prevent crime is better than to punish it, Ragged Schools ought to be fostered rather than taxed by the State. They have done, and are still doing, a great work for society in helping the friendless and in reclaiming the juvenile outcast; and thus their annals brilliantly prove that the same Gospel which saves also civilizes.

INGATHERING OF CHRIST'S LAMBS.

BY THE REV. W. S. PLUMER, D.D., OF NEW YORK.

It is a general truth that when the Church regards the conversion of any class as hopeless, vigorous efforts to that end are not likely to be put forth. For some years during the early ministry of the Rev. Dr. Herron, in Pittsburgh, there were no young people in his church. The fashion was to stay out of the communion of the church until settled in life. A very great change has taken place in forty years. Almost everywhere the majority of church-members become such under *twenty-two* years of age. I indulge the hope that ere long we may find the great mass of our young people giving good evidence of piety at a much earlier age. Why should our children run through a round of worldliness, vanity, and irreligion, before they come to the Saviour?

The late Dr. Spencer tells us of some minister who expressed doubts respecting the very early piety of Jeremiah and of John the Baptist; but I do not remember ever to have met with any writer who doubted that they were both sanctified from the womb. Such has long been the general belief

of Christians. Look, too, at the remarkable record respecting good king Josiah: "Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."

We are all familiar with the character and martyrdom of Polycarp. But how many overlook the fact of his very early piety. When about to be crowned with martyrdom, the pagan official called on him to reproach Christ, and his life should be spared. He was now ninety-five years old. He answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never done me wrong; and how can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me?" So that this martyr regarded himself as having been a Christian at *nine* years of age. Was not this better than to have stained his mind and defiled his conscience till he was *twenty-nine*, or *nineteen*, and then have turned to the Lord?

The Rev. Moses Hoge, D.D., of Virginia, was a man greatly revered and beloved in his day. He was the father of three eminent ministers of the Gospel. He also had several grandsons in the ministry. This venerable man, who died in 1822, often said to his friends, that he could not remember the time when he did not love the Lord Jesus Christ. Was not this much better than to be able to remember the time when he hated the Saviour, and despised his blood and righteousness?

It requires no more intellect to love than to hate Christ, to please than to displease him, to serve than to disobey him. When Samuel J. Mills was yet a child, he was so overcome by a sense of his responsibilities, that he said, "O, my mother, I wish I had never been born." His mother did not dare to relieve his mind by any false view, and said, "My son, you *are* born." It would have required no more mind to have said with Halyburton, "O blessed be God, that ever I was born."

The first and one of the happiest deaths I ever witnessed was that of a full-grown young man who was preparing for the ministry. I learned from reliable sources the history of his religious character. Among other things I remember that when he was not *four* years old, he set down a cup of bread and milk, and burst into tears. When his mother asked the cause, he answered, "I am afraid I shall die and not live any more." Surely this child had then intellect enough to receive Christ as he is offered in the Gospel.

More than *twenty-five* years ago, I attended a meeting in the South. There was preaching for several days. On Sabbath the Lord's Supper was administered, and some persons were added to the church. Among them was a small boy. I had never seen so youthful a communicant. I was interested to know his subsequent history. The Monday after joining the church, he went to school as usual. At playtime he went with the rest to engage in their usual exercises. But the old controversy between Cain and Abel revived with virulence. A number of the boys surrounded him, crying in bitter scorn, "Oh, here is a little Christian!" But God was with his young servant, and enabled him to bear with meekness all these taunts. He held on his way, and is now at the head of one of the colleges of our country and a successful preacher of righteousness.

The last visit paid me by Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander was for the purpose of preaching several days to my newly-formed church in Baltimore. One of his sermons was on love to Christ, and was founded on 1 Cor. xvi. 22. He began his sermon by saying, "I am in favour of early taking children to the house of God. When I was not more than four years old, I heard a minister preach on this text. From the time he began his sermon I was interested to know the meaning of *Anathema Maranatha*—words which I had never heard before—and I watched till he gave the usual explanation, and I never forgot it." Children know more than we are apt to think. I remember, too, that the excellent John Brown of Haddington says, "About the eighth year of my age, I happened in a crowd to push into the church at Abernethy on a Sacrament Sabbath. Then it was common for all but intended communicants to be excluded. Before I was excluded, I heard one or two tables served by a minister who spoke much to the commendation of Christ. This in a sweet and delightful manner captivated my young affections, and has since made me think that children should never be kept out of the church on such occasions."

Is not the general scope of these thoughts sustained by Scripture? What mean these words in the eighth psalm,—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger"? We are not in doubt as to the import of this verse. Our Saviour explained it. "When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were sore displeased, and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise"? We may rest assured that when Christ shall take to himself his great power and rule over all nations, young children will everywhere cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David."

Tradition says our Saviour never laughed, though he often wept. And the evangelists tell us of his tears. Yet they do also tell us of his once being filled with gladness. What was the occasion? Luke thus informs us: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto *babes:* even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Let us begin early. Let us call young sinners to repentance. Let us commend Christ to their tender affections. Let us tell them that they must hate sin and love Christ. "Feed my sheep" is no more a binding command than "Feed my lambs."

I believe the following statement is correct, and insert it as quite to my purpose:—

"What do you do without a mother to tell all your troubles to?" asked a child who had a mother of one who had not, for her mother was dead. "Mother told me whom to go to before she died," answered the little orphan; "I go to the Lord Jesus; he was mother's friend, and he is mine." "Jesus Christ is up in the sky; he is a way off, and has a great many things to attend to in heaven. It is not likely he can stop to mind you." "I do not know anything about that," said the orphan; "all I know is, *he says he will, and that's enough for me.*"

The little orphan was right. Jesus Christ was once a little child. He remembers and knows how to minister to the sorrows of childhood as well as those of riper years. It is not six months since a little child, not three years old, when dying, said to its parents, "Papa, mamma, don't cry; I am going home." Who can doubt that Christ is with such little sufferers? Why should it be thought a thing incredible that the Great Shepherd should be very tender and peculiarly near to his dear lambs?

It is sometimes said that the piety of children is apt to be very deficient in just views of the holiness of God. This may be so. But is not this a want in the piety of many adults? Where is the score of professors, taken promiscuously in any church, whose piety did not, from the first, need great improvement in this respect? Read the account of Phebe Bartlett, given by the elder President Edwards, and where can you find an account of a first conversion, in which God, in all his excellent characters, had greater prominence? I know not of any.

Others have thought that the piety of children was apt to be very deficient in a sense of the evil of sin. But read the Life of James Laing, written by McCheyne, and tell me what man or woman ever seemed more truly to loathe sin in the inmost soul.

Others suggest that children are very liable to self-deception respecting their own exercises of mind. This is true of persons of every age, and is a good reason for caution and discrimination in all cases, but cannot justify a discouraging course of procedure towards the early religious impressions of children.

In fine, I can sympathise with McCheyne when he says, "Jesus has reason to complain of us, that he can do no mighty work in our Sabbath schools, because of our unbelief." Let us pray for the children. Let us labour for the children. Let us hope for the children.

It seems to me that a sober discussion of the subject of early piety cannot fail to be useful. It is interesting to almost every family that is not wholly given to worldliness. Let me add a few things, known to me on good authority to be strictly true. Jennie —— died when a small child. She was recently and suddenly called out of time. One who knew her well says: "Her brief life was radiant with heavenly light. The last words I ever heard from her lips were her reading Psalm 139 with touching solemnity, and expressing her love for that portion of God's word."

A gentleman of high standing in one of the churches of New York writes thus:—"During the past year, our church has been greatly blessed by the presence with us, as we believe, of the Holy Spirit. More than a hundred have been hopefully converted, of whom a goodly number were children, and considerably more than half members of the Sunday school and Bible classes. I think we have had some beautiful cases of early piety, which have afforded us examples of deep conviction of sin, and implicit trust in the simple word of God, such as are not often seen in older people.

"I asked a child, 'How do you know that the Lord Jesus will receive you, if you have truly repented of sin and are trusting in him alone for salvation?' 'Why, because he says so,' was the reply. I asked a boy who was speaking to the session of the delight he took in prayer, why he found it necessary to pray now, seeing he hoped his sins were forgiven, and he had resolved hence-

forth to be the Lord's. He looked up with a sorrowful expression, burst into tears, and said, 'Oh, I am so wicked, I could not get along *at all* without prayer.'

"Some of these children, by faithful and most judicious efforts in behalf of others, have been instrumental of much good. I may safely say to you that the most satisfactory cases, so far at least as their appearance on examination for the communion is concerned, have been those of children and quite young persons."

On the whole, so far as we have light on this subject, let us walk by it. Let us remember that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, God in every generation ordains strength. Let us exhort children, and earnestly pray to God that to him they may give the dew of their youth. "Instead of the fathers shall be the children."

DUST-YARD WOMEN.

STRANGE and sometimes disgusting are the callings of many poor women, who are either too industrious to "eat the bread of idleness," or too independent to live by begging or as paupers. We sometimes see them raking in gutters for pieces of old iron, and not rarely groping for stray pieces of coal in the mud of the Thames. But prominent among this class are the females, more elderly than young, who labour in the dust-yards of Paddington. A stranger who penetrates the long lane which runs between, and parallel with, the Harrow Road and the Paddington Canal, is struck by noticing huge mountains of dust and ashes, through which broken pottery peeps in all directions. So valuable are many of these heaps, that a rich proprietor gave a dust-heap as the marriage dowry of his daughter; nor was it a small gift, seeing that its marketable value was about £10,000.

Amongst these heaps ill-clad, unwashed, but very determined-looking women are seen raking and sifting with wondrous energy. Quite an army as regards number, they are known in the district by the name of "Dust-yard women." They are all models of patient industry; for as work with them is a principle as well as a habit, they all work with their might. In fact, an idler or skulker would be considered as a disgrace to the "profession."

We are glad to know that something is being done for their spiritual and social welfare; for the Ragged School planted in their midst, in Church Place, has long laboured for their good. In addition to the untiring labours of the late excellent City missionary, Mr. Pearson, who made this school his head-quarters, there is a Provident Club, a Mothers' Meeting, a Ragged Church, and an Infant Nursery. Very many of the dust-yard women belong to these societies; and, from fourteen years' personal experience, we can testify that no class of our poorer sisters have more appreciated the spiritual labours of Ragged School workers than these poor women. Working, as they do, with energy in the open air—often on the top of heaps of ashes which dwarf the houses below—they have huge appetites, and a dialect not to be found in "Johnson's Dictionary." Yet never have we seen eyes so

riveted on a speaker as those of these poor wayfarers when they listened to the grand old story of the Cross.

But what they are in manners and customs will be better told by the following sketch from the *Clerkenwell News*, written by one who knows them well:—

Many must have observed, generally towards nightfall, struggling wearily along the darkening streets, with baskets of fuel upon their heads, which some of them balance, arms a-kimbo, with surprising adroitness, detached groups of womankind, or what might be supposed to be of the feminine gender, were it not for their begrimed skins, ragged coats—worn sometimes over a curtailed sort of spencer, battered head-gear, and strange-looking ankle-strappings, termed "cockers"—wending their way homewards, mostly to the frowsy slums that abound in the very poorest localities of London. These creatures are the miserable garbage-sifters of a dust-yard. Poor, lost that they are, shut out, as it would seem, during a whole lifetime from the veriest ray of human sunshine, or the very commonest feelings of human compassion, I premise what I have to say about their occupation, &c., by at once admitting that the majority are Irish women, and that I know, from long experience, that they, and their English sisterhood as well, are fearfully habituated to the utterance of bad language, in which particular, be it said, they are most disgracefully distanced by their middlemen supervisors ("moulder," is the technical appellative), whose sense of common decency, as of common shame, is about at par. But that the feelings of compassion for each other have been altogether driven from their breasts by hard and filthy labour, by untold physical privations, or by the scandalous and revolting bullyism to which they are unceasingly subjected, is very far from being the fact. Let one of their number be prostrated by sickness; has there occurred a death; is there to be a burial, and the *saucepan* is sure to go its round on Saturdays. The contributions may be only in coppers, but I have observed a goodly crop of shillings to spring out of these collected pence.

Women there are who labour at the poisonous white-lead works, at the trotter-dresser's, at (so I am told) the bone-boilers; but certainly the feminine sifters of a dust-yard take rank as the lowest of the low. These sifters are of all ages—from under fifteen to over sixty. The Irish element may be stated at about three-fifths of the gross total. It is worth chronicling as a remarkable fact, that, during several years of observation, I do not remember to have once heard a dispute about religion. Is our reader disposed to ask, if only as a whet to his curiosity, "What is the religion of a dustyard?" I regret to reply, "The question is unanswerable." Mothers, daughters, and granddaughters are there. I have seen women within only a few hours of their confinement—heard them whooped at, too, in language of the most heart-sickening ribaldry—thumping away with a sieve filled to the brim with clinkers, that would furnish a task for the muscles of a brawny navvy. In two cases coming under my observation the pangs of labour have seized upon the toilers whilst at work.

Their "findings," about which so much has been said, I believe to be not very considerable. Their appetites are keen, and their tastes remarkable. One is not led much to wonder at their ravenous appropriation from the

dust-heap of a cabbage or a potato; but it very forcibly bespeaks the extreme poverty of their surroundings to note their wolf-like seizure of an unsavoury bloater, a decomposed haddock, or a yawning oyster! "All is flesh, and all flesh is grub to a poor sifter," say they. Their hours of labour in "full time" are from seven to twelve A.M., and from one to five P.M. Their pay, 1s. per diem; but the average throughout the year may be stated at about 10d. a-day, with a measure of cinders. How they possibly contrive to subsist, or even to exist, on such a wage, may well enough surprise the uninitiated, as, I must confess, it has often mystified even a close inquirer like myself. With the very poorest of these despised creatures, garbage gathered from the dust-heap, with, perhaps, a pennyworth of bread, is their staple meat at noon. Breakfast and tea I apprehend to be quite an "Arabian Night's" fancy. How, possibly, can it be otherwise? Take, by way of illustration, the following fact. All these miserable creatures are assembled at seven A.M., standing knee-deep in a very swamp of ashes—they like them to be hot, with a warm, uprising vapour, by-the-by—rain is pelting down, and by eight they are drenched to the skin. Then they go home, or anywhere—stand on the lee-side of a wall, crouch beneath a slush-cart, venture into a horse-stall—till one P.M. Fair now, work is resumed till five, when their earnings will amount to 6d.! Divided and subdivided with all possible regard to the most rigid economy, and what will they, what can they, do with 6d.?

SYDNEY RAGGED SCHOOL, NEW SOUTH WALES.

FOLLOWING the example of the mother country, Ragged Schools have been established in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and other colonies. Among these, the most important is that which was founded in Sydney, New South Wales, by one who was formerly an earnest Ragged School Teacher in London. Gradually embracing most of the agencies found so beneficial in London, it has, in addition to Sunday, Day, and Night Schools, Boys' Industrial Classes, a Temperance Society, and Parents' Meetings. There are now about 700 scholars and adults connected with the school, all being trained for this world as well as for the next.

We are glad to find, true to their London experience, that in a day of avowed or veiled sectarianism, the managers conduct the school on Bible and therefore real catholic principles. Thus both its platform and its working staff present an example of the practicability of Christians of different views of Church government working together for Christ, meeting, in fact, on earth, as by and bye they must meet in heaven. Amongst its principal supporters is the Bishop of Sydney, who at the last annual meeting gave the following *résumé* of the work both in England and the colonies:—

The Bishop of Sydney said, that when the secretary sent him an invitation to attend this meeting, he couched it in terms which made his invitation to himself irresistible, for said he, "we have not changed our principles." In these days of many changes it was so gratifying to find one who adhered to the good rule of Scriptural instruction, that he could not, notwithstanding other engagements, find in his heart to refuse the invitation to advocate the cause of the

schools established by the Ragged School Committee. He did not know what that body might be when it presented itself in all its numerical importance; but his idea was, that it was like the German schoolmaster, who, when asked, "where are your laws?" said, "Oh, I am the laws." If we wanted to know the Ragged School Committee, we must look to Mr. Joy. It was a very great pleasure to do anything, however feeble and however humble, even the small thing of making a speech on this occasion, when it was to assist the labours of the unwearied friend of ragged schools in this city.

It was now twenty-two years since ragged schools were first established in England. They had attained their majority; and here in this country we were endeavouring to follow the good example set us at home, expecting that in due time, with God's blessing and the assistance of good friends to the Sydney ragged schools, they would also attain their majority. In England, at the present time, the scholars must be above one hundred thousand, and it was impossible to state the amount of good that had been accomplished by this effort. It was one of the blessed tokens of the time in which we live, that there was an endeavour on the part of the great and the good in every department of life, to reach the necessities of the labouring poor. Sunday schools were now matters of comparatively ancient history, but ragged schools and all their accompaniments were of recent date; and how many blessed institutions had sprung out of ragged schools! We had the Shoe-black Brigade, finding employment for hundreds in London and the principal cities of England; then, the "Mothers' Meeting," the "Missing Link" (the Bible Woman), each had arisen out of the effort to bring ragged schools and kindred institutions to bear upon the wants of the labouring classes. Youths were trained to habits of industry, sobriety, and good order, so as to be fitted for usefulness in various kinds of employment; these were results that had arisen from the endeavour by means of ragged schools to reach the lowest strata of society. Much was due to Lord Shaftesbury, one of the great promoters of these institutions, and who had the great gratification year after year of seeing hundreds of these boys pass before him, and receive testimonials of good conduct during the past year—a testimonial much prized by them, and affording the surest prospect of a good situation on leaving the school. He (the Bishop) was acquainted with those who had risen to very honourable positions in society from first being brought out of the degraded position in which their parents had plunged them, by the instrumentality of a ragged school. He knew one admirable teacher who received his first rudiments of instruction in a ragged school, and it was mentioned in the report of the last annual meeting in London, that two hundred of the teachers in ragged schools were themselves once pupils at the various ragged schools in the metropolis.

The principle which Mr. Joy adverted to in the invitation was this,—that in our ragged schools Scriptural instruction was given without any stint or adulteration, without any fear, without interference, and with a determination not to accept any assistance from any quarter whatever, either voluntary or from the State, which should interfere with his first great principle, that religious instruction by means of the Bible was to be communicated to every child in the school. He rejoiced in the adoption and carrying out of such a principle, and he would it were carried out in every school in the colony. He trusted that the day would come when every child in the schools of the colonies should be not only permitted but solicited to read the Bible and talk out of it the great saving truths of Christ's Gospel. Would that in this respect every school in the country were conducted on the principle of Mr. Joy's ragged school. It would be a happy day for the country if this were brought to pass.

Another principle was this,—that the assistance given in the Sunday school

was, or ought to be, principally that of voluntary teachers. He knew there were young men who, having assisted in their own local Sunday schools, afterwards went to the ragged school and spent there their Sunday evenings at a great sacrifice that few would be willing to make. He congratulated those actively engaged in carrying this great principle into practice. He had known some of those young men, who were among the best and most efficient Sunday school teachers, forward in every kind of good work, and he hoped their numbers would increase. If any present this evening were desirous of joining in the good work, they could avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the opening of these schools, and give assistance which was necessary, would be valuable, and must be honourable; it was that charity which blessed those who imparted it as well as those who received it. He believed also, that if a person wished to have attached friends, he could not do better than seek friendship with the children of these ragged schools. He knew one lady who, whenever she entered that school, had been besieged, as it were, by the attentions of the children there, and who, if they could in any way whatever manifest their gratitude for her kindness, would be very forward to do it. Lord Shaftesbury, what troops of friends had he among this class! He mentioned that a short time ago he went into the public room of an hotel in London, when a smart dapper little waiter came in. He said, "How do you do, my lord, I hope you're quite well." "And pray who are you?" rejoined his lordship. "Oh," said the youth, "I belonged to such and a ragged school, and received a reward from your lordship's hands, and now I've got this situation, which is a very nice one." He had heard of a clergyman, also, who having charge of a very rough district in London, had established a ragged school in one portion of it. Some time after that, on a fine summer evening, he thought he should like to address those who never came into the House of God to hear his word, and having fixed his table where there was no probability of his interfering with the public thoroughfare, he found to his dismay that seven or eight of the greatest roughs in the neighbourhood came and planted themselves in close proximity to his table. Knowing that they were some of the most dangerous and profligate, he felt that he was certainly in for some tremendous row. They bade him go on, and he preached his sermon, to which they listened without offering any disturbance, and as he descended from the table he asked them what they came here for. They told him that some of the fellows in the neighbourhood might have troubled him, and as he had set up a ragged school in the place they had come to look after him. He would say, that if any clergyman or minister wished to surround himself with a troop of faithful friends, let him interest himself in the ragged school or set up one himself: he would then find among the humblest classes those ready on any seasonable occasion to look after him.

A HINDOO MOTHERS' MEETING.

BY MRS. PORTER.

MOTHERS' Meetings are held not only in England, but also in India. One of these meetings we have carried on for some time at Cuddapah. Between thirty and forty native Christian women attend. Many of these are recent converts, and know very little about maternal responsibility. When you speak to them about the training of their little ones, their constant reply is, "What do I know?" Between them and those mothers who have been

brought up in our Mission Schools, the contrast in this particular is most remarkable, and furnishes an encouraging and instructive fact to the supporters of female education in the East. To hear a Hindoo Christian mother teaching her pretty little lisping one of two years old to repeat, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," or, "There is a happy land," &c., and to know that that child will not sleep until she has prostrated herself upon her mat, and said, "O my Father in heaven! take care of me, and make me good, for Jesus' sake, Amen," would, I am sure, amply repay the kind friends who contribute towards the support of those mothers when in the Mission School.

One of our Christian mothers, after losing all her children but one, went with her surviving child to a distant village, hoping to benefit by the change. Her health had greatly suffered by the sudden removal of the last little one who died. When she had been a day or two in the village, a woman who had previously known her asked why she looked so sad.

"Ah!" she said, "how can I look glad? I have lost my last boy."

"Is it so?" said the woman; "I can then feel for you. I have lost *all* my children one after the other; they have all died. I have spent much money for medicine, consulted many priests, and given them much money; many, many tears I have shed, but they have all died. When the last was born I took him to the temple, according to the direction of the gooroo, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and had a brass charm made, and the idol's name engraved upon it, and took it to the idol. 'O Swamy,' I said, 'my children have all died but this one, and I have put your name upon this brass, and he shall wear it tied to a string around his neck. I will bring the first lock of his hair, and sacrifice it to thee; but, oh, let him live! Pity me—I am a poor mother."

"Well, and did the child live?"

"Oh, no! I took the first lock of his hair and gave it to the idol, but he died soon after. I will fetch the charm, and show you. Here it is, just as I took it from his neck, poor baby!" and her tears flowed afresh.

The little girl, the daughter of the Christian woman, who had been all this time listening to this tale of woe, taking up the charm, said, "Anorik, why, you must not keep this—it has done no good; why, put it away, and pray to the true God; he can hear you—that idol cannot; try, amah [or madam], perhaps he may answer you. Serve Jesus. I will read to you about Jesus. I have learned to read in the Mission School at Cuddapah, and I can tell you how kind Jesus is."

This poor woman, astonished at so much sense, as she called it, in a little girl, listened to her, and the two mothers talked together about the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. God blessed the humble efforts of the Christian mother and her little daughter, and the woman has since been baptized in the name of Jesus. She now has another child—oh that it may be spared to her!

On coming away the woman offered to give the little girl the charm: "It is of no use to me, will you take it?"

The little girl said, "Yes, I will take it to my lady and tell her about you; she will pity you, I am sure."

On her return to school she brought it to me, and her mother told me the circumstance as I have related it.

Oh! let me ask Christian mothers not to forget to pray for those who sorrow without hope. Among the 250 who were baptized during the past year by my dear husband, there are many mothers and some children for whom we feel much concern. For the mothers we can do little; but if our funds would allow us, we wish to take two girls and two boys from each village, and instruct them for two or three years in our Boarding School; then we hope they may go back to their homes and take with them knowledge which shall prove useful for time and eternity.

FEMALE WORKERS FOR CHRIST.

THE emerald, one of the most beautiful and most valuable of stones, seems to be a fit emblem of those whose lives are especially devoted to labours of love for others, as it wears the soft verdant hue of the earth which they bless. There is a woman, mentioned but once in the Scriptures, whom I select as an example of the emerald gem—"*the beloved Persis, who laboured much in the Lord.*" I would especially mention her, because her honoured work was probably much the same as that of many a lowly Christian in our own time. We know not that she was able to give gold, but she gave time, she gave thought, she gave effort, she laboured—and her labours were accepted.

Every child of God, as far as ability is given him, is bound to be a worker for God: but there are some who are especially distinguished by active usefulness in his vineyard. What a devoted band of Ragged School and Sunday School Teachers, District Visitors, Tract Distributors, Bible Readers of either sex, rise before us as the emeralds of Christ! Many of these, after their daily toil, sacrifice hours of rest to give them to the highest, holiest work! But a large number of the labourers are women, independent and unmarried, who, having no very close earthly ties, adopt the poor as their family, and not needing to work for their daily bread, make it their business of life to go on errands of mercy.

Such a labourer was Amelia Sieveking, a lady of Hamburg, active in every good work. An extract from one of her letters, apologising for seldom writing to a friend, will give some idea of the energy and self-denying exertions of one who "laboured in the Lord."

"On Tuesday I get up at half-past four, and am employed for the children till six. I take my breakfast while I am at work. At six o'clock I set off for the city, and arrive at the Town Hall about a quarter after seven. Here there are generally about twenty or more poor people waiting to speak to me. This lasts till half-past eight, when I go to our own house, and look through any notes that have come for me, or prepare something more for my school; and if there is any time left before lessons begin, I take another walk, either to call on some of the poor people, or go on their errands to the doctor for the poor, the guardians, and the like. At ten o'clock my little ones come to me, and stay till near two. At half-past two I go to the Free School, where I give religious instruction till half-past three. The time from half-past three till five is filled up with errands or writing for the Association.

At five some of my former scholars assemble, and I first have a regular Bible lesson with them, then we drink tea and converse. . . . At eight o'clock they separate. Meantime the visiting reports from the ladies of the Association have been sent in. These reports, much more than a hundred in number, must now be looked through. . . . This work employs me as long as I can keep awake, but I cannot finish it before bedtime. Next morning up again at half-past four." . . . After describing the variation, not cessation, of labour, brought by other days of the week, Miss Sieveking adds, "You will see there is no mention of any dinner-time on these three days, and in fact I take none. An occasional slice of bread-and-butter, a hard-boiled egg, or a bit of cold meat, generally eaten standing, I find sufficient. . . . . I am regularly at work by five o'clock in the morning; many days I cannot set foot in the garden."

"What a life of drudgery!" may the reader exclaim. "It may be better 'to wear out than to rust out,' yet such an incessant strain upon all the powers of mind and body must make existence itself a burden!"

Was it so with Amelia Sieveking? We have the experience of this Persis, this earnest worker for God, recorded in such words as the following:—

"Now that I have found the proper element of my life, I feel such a spring and freshness within me, that I could almost boast that I shall never be old. Paul Gerhardt's verse, which many years ago took such a wonderful hold on me, and seemed to penetrate my very soul when I heard it sung at a Christmas festival, might now be the motto of my life:—

'My heart within me springs,
It can no more be sad,
For very joy it laughs and sings,
Sees naught but sunshine glad!

'The sun that glads mine eyes
Is Christ, the Lord I love:
I sing for joy of that which lies
Stored up for me above!'

. . . . As many as are the members of my large family of children and poor people, so many ways seem to me to be opened for me to the throne of mercy of our God, and how rich and joyful are the experiences granted to me by His compassion. I recollect on the last Christmas Eve in my father's house, I felt vexed with myself because I could not enjoy the presents as I used to do in earlier days. More than Christmas joy is now my portion, when such rich gifts for my poor people flow in, often quite unexpectedly, and often without the names of the givers. The joy of the little ones round the lighted fir-tree may be louder—deeper and sweeter it certainly is not. . . . . How many other things occur to afford me a sweeter pleasure still. Now it is a tear of joy in the eyes of a sick man comforted by the Gospel, now a blessing from dying lips; then the sight of a poor family permanently rescued from destitution, or a good character of some poor person employed at my recommendation. I cannot count up all these things, but I can assure you that my heart often runs over with thankful joy."

Here was an emerald that sparkled! Yes, the life of the worker for God is usually a peculiarly happy life. His office is like that of the bee—he may

labour from morning till night, but he is *collecting honey* all the time. He has no leisure to pine over fanciful woes, to brood over petty wrongs. He is employed on earth in angels' work, and shares something of the joy of angels. "What pleasure can be found," the worldling may ask, "in entering loathsome haunts of misery and vice, in breathing polluted air, in exhausting one's strength in teaching the ignorant and depraved, or attempting to cheer the unhappy?" To such I would say, "Go and try." The Ragged School teacher remembers his crowded class, the hospital visitor her ward of patients, with deeper interest and sweeter pleasure than the gay lady her ball, or the sportsman his well-stocked preserve. "The short and simple annals of the poor" often possess thrilling interest for those who hear them from the lips of those whom their mercy has relieved.

And sweetest of all is the thought that the labour of love is done under the Master's eye, and for the Master's sake!

> "When humbly labouring for my Lord
> Faint grows the heart, and weak the limb,
> What strength and joy are in the word—
> It is—*for Him!*"

But oh! how weak, how imperfect, are efforts the most earnest! On nothing that man can do can he rest the smallest claim to the mercy of God. His offering of life service is as the garland of wild flowers which a child lays at a parent's feet—but the offering is smiled upon and accepted. He who in active usefulness lays out his talents—be they few or be they many—for God, in a spirit of faith and humility, is he to whom the Master in the parable says—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Perhaps, dear reader, you are willing to be a worker, but no path of usefulness seems open before you—you have little opportunity of serving your fellow-creatures, save perhaps by giving a few tracts, speaking a few words, or performing some trivial acts of kindness. You are discouraged at being able to do so little, and therefore feel tempted, like the servant in the parable, to bury your one talent, because it is but one! Never let it be so! *Whatever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might.* Take the work set before you, and perform it. Whether it be great or small, it is the work appointed for you to do. The devoted missionary Elliott, in extreme old age, was found teaching a little child the alphabet, and expressed his thankfulness that, when unfit for other work, his Lord permitted him still to do that.

To encourage those who have the will, though little ability to work, I throw a few thoughts on the subject into the form of a dream.

Methought I saw many workers, each at her embroidery frame, busy preparing the "raiment of needlework" in which the King's daughter, the Church of Christ, shall be brought to her Lord and King. Very goodly were the flowers which seemed to grow beneath the fingers of the workers; they rejoiced in their labours, and looked up and smiled, for the word of Scripture was sounding in their ears: "God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works and labour that proceedeth of love, which love you have showed for his name sake, which have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister."

But there was one who laboured, and yet did not rejoice. Her materials were coarse, her skill was small, her work was as the work of an ignorant child. With a mournful feeling of discouragement she gazed around her on the skilled and the gifted, and compared her poor efforts with theirs. "They do so much, and I do so little; they work so rapidly, and I so slowly! I am ashamed and humbled when I look down on work so mean and worthless as mine."

Then a still small voice breathed gently the words, "*She hath done what she could!*" and a ray of sunshine, like an approving smile from heaven, fell on the maiden's work; and behold, all the rude and imperfect flowers were changed to sparkling gems!

"This is not *my* work!" exclaimed the wondering servant; "this is the Lord's doing! His blessing has changed what was worthless to what is precious in his sight; the crown of rejoicing is mine, but his be the glory for ever!"—*Home Visitor.*

A. L. O. E.

THE STORY OF A POLICE-INSPECTOR'S SON.

A BOY was met by a gentleman at the bottom of Holborn Hill, on a very wet day. He and another lad, much older, were together, and were in a deplorable condition, and they were posting on, without heeding the bustle around them, to endeavour to secure a lodging at the casual ward of a workhouse. The gentleman stopped them, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the elder lad, said, "Would you like to go to sea, my boy?" The reply soon came, which was, "Oh, sir, that is just what I want! I've been trying, but can't get off." The address of the Queen Street Refuge was given to the lads, and away they started with light hearts and nimble steps. On reaching the refuge, they were at once received by the master.

The account the boys subsequently gave of themselves was this:—They had been in London but two days. They were unknown to each other until they met at the Police Station in Bow Street, while waiting outside to obtain an order for a night's lodging at the casual ward of the Strand Union. They slept at that union one night, the next night they slept at Islington, and when met, as before related, they were on their road to another union. At most of the unions, the applicants who require only a night's lodging are not allowed to enter the casual ward more than once in seven days, so that the poor creatures who resort to these places are obliged to seek a fresh resting-spot every night; and thus it would have been with these poor boys, until their association with all the vile and wretched who resort to these wards for a night's shelter would have led, in all probability, to the most sad results on their lives and characters. By the good Providence of God these two simple country boys were rescued ere they got contaminated with the evil ones who frequent these wards, and in days to come they no doubt will ever be grateful to the Father of the fatherless for directing their steps to this Refuge.

One boy's father, who was an inspector of police in Suffolk, died when he was only three years old; his mother died when he was eleven; and he was then put into the union, where he remained a year or two. He was then put out to a small place, where he stayed a short time, but not suiting it, he

was discharged; and dreading to return to the union, he thought he would try to get work without going back there. He had not succeeded, and had been wandering about the country, until at last he came to London, where he was met as above stated. Now he has found a home, and it is believed he will become a bright man. He has one brother at sea, and another in the army, but he cannot tell where they are. He has also one sister in the union, and another in service.

Who can tell from what evils this orphan has been saved by being admitted into the Refuge? And this is but one case of many thus rescued from moral ruin.

The Poet's Corner.

FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN.

"The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."—LUKE vi. 23.

A LITTLE room with a rugless floor,
And the winter blast,
As it whistles past,
Pierces in at the slender door.
In the window-sill a plant or two,
Thrive as plants are wont to do
In a cottage-pane,
Where the light of day
Hath its wildest play,
And no curtains send it out again.
A table bare, and one old Book,
In which dim eyes grow bright to look;
A smouldering fire, and two big chairs,
A bed for the feeble, brought down-stairs;
And there, in the last faint flicker of life,
Sit a grey old man and his helpless wife.

A new-turned grave of still decay,
And a home of spirits away, away;
A blissful home, so passing fair,
As none may tell who have not been there.
A human form, with scars too deep
For a tearless gaze, if spirits weep;
His riven brows with triumph crown'd,
And a countless host of subjects round,
Bow'd in the hush of love profound.
A voiceless choir, a waiting throng,
Ready to burst in instant song,
Soon as the word "Come forth" is given,
And their bodies rise to their souls in heaven.

Princely among a princely race,
And near the King, in bright array,
Sunn'd with the glory of His face,
Who are they?
Who but the helpless, aged poor
Whose coffins pass'd from that cottage-door

The Editor's Note-book.

VARIETY IN GOD'S ORCHARD.

Seeing a tree grow somewhat irregular, in a very neat orchard, I told the owner it was a pity that tree should stand there, and that, if it were mine, I would root it up, and thereby reduce the orchard to an exact uniformity. He replied, "that he rather regarded the fruit than the form; and that this light inconveniency was abundantly preponderated by a more considerable advantage. This tree," said he, "which you would root up, hath yielded me more fruit than many of those trees which have nothing else to commend them but their regular situation."

I could not but yield to the reason of this answer; and could wish it had been spoken so loud, that all those had heard it who would not stick to root up many hundreds of the best bearers in the Lord's orchard, because they stand not in exact order with other more conformable, but less beneficial trees. They destroy the fruits, to preserve the accidental form.

SUCCESSFUL WORKERS.

"Nothing succeeds like success," said a wit. Yet success is not an isolated thing, standing apart from what went before. Success, in fact, is merely a link, though the completing one, in a long chain, which took rare skill to forge. For whether we can trace the connecting links or not, we may be sure that success is always married to prior and strenuous labour. It, in fact, indicates that thoroughness which is never satisfied whilst anything remains to be won. Hence we may say to every grumbler—more especially to any Ragged School teacher who fails when his colleagues succeed—in the language of David to his brother Eliab, "Is there not a *cause?*"

Yet success is a curious thing. Unsuccessful people do not believe in it; they attribute it to "chance," or "luck," or "circumstances." But, since "there can be no effects without a cause," surely if a man, or an undertaking, fails repeatedly and hopelessly, may it not be just possible that there is some hidden cause for the same? Possibly a fault—may be, only a misfortune—but still some tangible reason which accounts for failure. On the other hand, if a man or his doings are successful, is it not common sense, as well as common charity, to admit that possibly he deserves to succeed?

There is no injustice, but a solemn necessity, in the Parable of the Talents. The doctrine, "From him that hath little shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have," is paralleled by the equally solemn truth, "Unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required." But our own impression, taking our Lord's parable as a clue, is, that it is not usually those with five talents who prove unfaithful, but those who, with but one, have comparatively less to do for Christ.

Reader, how do you work for Jesus? Are you successful? If not, why not?

WORK BORN OF WORK.

At the battle of Meeanee, an officer who had been doing good service came up to the great general, Sir Charles Napier, and said, "Sir Charles, we have taken a standard." The general looked at him, but made no reply, and turning round, began to speak to some one else; upon which the officer repeated, "Sir Charles, we have taken a standard." The general turned sharp round upon him, and said, "*Then take another.*"

The spirit which this great general would impress on his subordinate should be possessed by every Ragged School teacher. The conflict must be persistently kept up so long as there is any unsubdued sin in ourselves, or any soul living in enmity to God.

Has Christ given us one soul, let that

be an incentive to rescue another from destruction. For, from the fact that He has graciously given us one soul, we may infer that He intends to give us another and yet another, until we can say, "We have finished the work thou gavest us to do."

Our Library Table.

Sunday School Statistics. By F. J. Hartley. London: Sunday School Union.

This tract contains a concise sketch of the rise, progress, and present state of Sunday Schools, so far as figures can give any insight into a religious movement. The Census of 1851 supplied, for the first time, statistics relative to Church, Chapel, and Sunday School attendance. Then it was found that the vast majority of the population did not make such a bare profession of religion as attendance at public worship implies. The proportion of such attendance as compared with the population much varied in different districts. But, in comparison with most of the provinces, the attendance in London appeared to be at zero. One benefit at least resulted to our juveniles from the startling report framed by Mr. Horace Mann; for, first by conference, and then by direct canvass from house to house for scholars, an effort was made to increase the attendance at the London Sunday Schools. Nor did these exertions, carried on as they were persistingly and in prayer, prove abortive. Thus Mr. Hartley states that—"The proportion of Sunday Scholars to population was, in 1851, 5.95 per cent., or 1 in 16.8; in 1866, 7.04 per cent., or 1 in 14.19: or in other words, while the population has increased 30 per cent. in the past 15 years, the number of Sunday scholars has increased 56 per cent."

Much, however, still remains to be done before the spiritual wants of this city of cities can be regarded as overtaken. For the metropolis contains 680,000 children between five and fifteen years of age, whilst there are only 220,000 in the whole of the London Sunday Schools. It thus appears that two-thirds of the juvenile population eligible for Sunday Schools are not yet reached. In addition, with 30,000 scholars in the London Ragged Schools, it is estimated that there are at least 30,000 more not yet embraced by those institutions.

Considering the difficulty of marshalling figures so numerous as those collected by Mr. Hartley, this sketch is very lucid and readable. We trust that its perusal will lead many Christians, who seem to think that the whole duty of religion consists in occupying their pews regularly on the Lord's Day, to see that, as the fruit of personal salvation, they are bound to become light-bearers to a dark world. Then Sunday Schools and Ragged Schools will not appeal until speakers are hoarse, for personal help, in vain. Nor shall we be compelled to exclaim, when we see hundreds kept out of Ragged Sunday Schools, not for want of scholars, but for lack of voluntary teachers—Here is the flock, eager to be taught the way of eternal life; but where are the shepherds?

Children's Friend. London: Seeley and Co.

There is no lack of children's magazines in these days. There is scarcely any religious society without its juvenile organ; and almost every section of the visible church thus caters for the young of its flock. As, happily, the literature provided for children is usually evangelical, and always wholesome, there are

few serials which cannot be placed safely in the hands of our juveniles. Probably the great defect in this influx of child-literature is that there is too much scissors-and-paste work. Hence, as there is little original writing, the same poetry and the same tales run the round of children's magazines. The "Children's Friend," now in its seventh year, is freer from this growing evil than most serials; and we are glad to find that when it cites any piece, it gives the name of the book from whence the extract was taken. It is freely illustrated; and some of the ornamental letters are typographic gems.

Correspondence.

"HONOUR AMONG THIEVES": A PLEA FOR MORE TEACHERS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I was much struck by the proofs supplied by the life of the noted Spitalfields philanthropist, Mr. Peter Bedford (*ante*, p. 36), that, outcasts though they be, there are still relics of "honour among thieves." That the feeling of gratitude is not altogether extinct in the predatory class there can be no doubt. Hence most Ragged School teachers who labour in the thieves' quarter can supply striking confirmatory facts from their own experience. For, bad as professional thieves are, it is not their habit to insult ladies who labour for their social reclamation, nor to rob teachers whom they know work solely for Christ, and not for pelf.

Without reporting any special case, I may be permitted to say that, after visiting and working in Ragged Schools in Field Lane, in St. Giles's, and in the "Devil's Acre" of Westminster for twenty years, I have not received one insult during that long period. Though too blind alleys, which, like purses, have but one mouth and no other outlet, and which seem purposely prepared to screen our felon population, have been traversed at all hours, day and night, I have not once been robbed of a single pocket handkerchief. Mobs have been gathered to see semi-nude females fighting more like demons than women; roughs have gambled through the long hours, or varied their amusement in winter by snow-balling each other, yet the Christian visitor had not been molested; and the only sign of their recognizing his presence has been this, "Halloo, Bill, let the gem'man pass." Through the fermenting mass he has passed in safety; all striving to make his pathway easy through the dense and excited throng. Nor has his pathway been cleared by gold—thieves they may be, but as a class they are not mercenary to their benefactors. I too often saw, and that in days when Ragged School were a novelty, and policemen dared not enter its precincts single-handed, delicate ladies of the aristocracy traverse the thieves' quarter, and even enter the thieves' dens of Westminster, not only without insult, but with every sign of true veneration. The fact that they were known to be on errands of mercy to their little ones has been an "Open, Sesame," to their heart of hearts. Thus they who have robbed others without compunction, and bragged of their achievements in breaking divine and human laws without detection,

have treated Christ's teachers with every sign of respect. For they well knew that these were the only true friends they had in the wide world.

Now why are these facts—and they might be multiplied if needful—reported? Simply because many Christians—not *veneer* ones, such as abound, as predicted (2 Tim. iii. 5) in these last days—thoroughly in earnest, have been afraid to proffer their services to the Ragged Schools planted in the thieves' quarter, lest they should be robbed or injured. Not that this can be regarded, even if this fancy picture were realized, as an adequate excuse for rejecting the Master's law, "Preach the gospel to *every* creature," whether he be thief or moral man. And surely he knows little of what he personally owes to Christ who can refuse to labour in a vineyard like this, merely because difficulty, or possible danger, may beset his footsteps. Men who thus lag in the rear never yet wore the "Victoria Cross," for it is the forlorn hope alone that wins the cross of honour. Still it is satisfactory to know that our felon population are amenable to the principle of honour; or, as a thief once said, "I should scorn to rob or hurt those who are doing for my children what there was no one to do for me when I was young, or I should not be what I now am!"

It is true that we do sometimes hear of a Ragged School teacher being insulted as he penetrates the dens which disgrace this city. But, on inquiry, it is generally found that, however zealous, his judgment was at zero: for he forgot Solomon's maxim, "There is a time to keep silence"; or he spake fiercely, when, like his Divine Master, he ought to have spoken lovingly. Let us, then, be careful never to *invite* insult, and we need not fear but that in the vilest dens we shall find an echo to our love.

For my own part, after a survey of the Ragged School workfield, I think that no schools have such inducements to active service as those planted in the thieves' quarter. For in no part have the labours of Ragged School teachers been mere appreciated, nor have brought forth more precious fruit. The annals of such schools have, in fact, proved that the words of Jesus were not limited to his era, "the publicans and harlots enter into heaven" before the Pharisees and Sadducees of the age. Let us ever remember that the last soul saved by Christ before he expired was a robber: and, happily, very many of this class have been saved in these our days.

Will not, then, some reader try the experiment of seeing whether love is not born of love, by offering his or her service in some Ragged School planted "where Satan's seat is"? If so, "What thou doest, do quickly," for to-morrow may be a day too late. Yours, &c.,

Q. IN THE CORNER.

SPECIFIC PRAYER.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In your February number, "T. B." gives an example of a ragged infant's *specific* prayer, which is as remarkable for its faith as for its simplicity. Probably this is the very kind of prayer for which God waits, in order to make Ragged School teachers soul-winners. It is useless to ask God for a blessing on Ragged Schools *en masse*, without specifying for whom we pray, and what we really want. Hence every teacher ought to be prayed for

statedly by every teacher in the same Ragged School; and every child in a class ought to be *individually* prayed for by his teacher.

Sick scholars ought specifically to be prayed for; and if they were also visited at home, it would prove that we did not delegate to God the duty he has assigned to ourselves. So sick or sorrowing teachers ought to be especially prayed for by fellow-workers. Such cases continually occur; where prayer, if it did not lead to the cure of the disease (James v. 16), would probably tend to alleviate the sufferer. Take the following three illustrations of what I mean by praying for sick or sorrowing Ragged School teachers—in other words, by *specific prayer*:—

1. The Superintendent of Field Lane, Mr. R. Mounstephen, about a month ago, fractured the tendon Achilles, and he is not likely to resume his duties for some time. Considering the important sphere he occupies, can we think that specific prayer in this case would be wasted breath?

2. Mr. Molineux, sen., is mourning over the death of an only son who recently died at the early age of thirty-three. One of the founders, he was the beloved Superintendent of Fitzroy Market School for many years, devoting every night in the week to this onerous work. Think you that God would withhold support from the aged parents of his faithful servant were he asked to sanctify this heavy blow?

3. Mr. Sayer, the diligent master of Lamb and Flag School, is lying prostrate with a terrible inward disease. Has not such an earnest work a claim on our sympathy? and is this not a case which might be especially brought by his co-workers before him who can alone alleviate the pains endured?

By such specific prayer we should at least show that we really believe that God will answer prayer in these days just as he answered specific prayer in the days of Hezekiah. And thereby, at least, we should comply with the Biblical injunction, "Weep with those that weep."

Yours, &c.,

February 14. A. B. C.

Notices of Meetings.

POPLAR.

On the 8th of January, an industrial exhibition of articles manufactured by the children of the above school, together with a bazaar of useful and fancy articles made and presented by several ladies and friends, was opened by Henry Green, jun., Esq., whose speech abounded with sound argument as to the good of such exhibitions. He was supported by Mr. Selfe, Mr. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, and several gentlemen connected with the school. The room was tastefully decorated with flags and mottoes, and presented quite a gay appearance. The articles made by the children were spoken of very highly by the visitors.

There were a large proportion of the children's parents present during the three evenings the exhibition was open, who were highly delighted at viewing the varied proofs of their children's ingenuity. They bought articles of clothing, to the number of two or three hundred, which were specially provided for the purpose, and sold to them at a cheap rate. It is proposed, in a short time, to hold a meeting for the distribution of prizes to be awarded to the youthful exhibitors.

Papers, Original and Selected.

OUR PRIZE SCHOLARS.

Among the most cherished memories of manhood are the days when, as school-boys, we stepped on the platform at Christmas to receive publicly the books won either by hard study or by good conduct. Nor was the pleasure merely selfish, for the main element in the gratification felt was the knowledge that relations and school-fellows were present to echo our joyous feelings. For, jubilant as we were, we were far more joyous to think how happy our success would make the "old folks at home."

As the boy-heart is the same in all ranks and in all places, similar feelings were doubtless excited in our young friends who, on the 19th of March last, marched past our noble President to receive at his hands, with many a pleasant smile and many a cheery word, the reward of their good conduct in the kitchen or the factory. Nor can we doubt that, like youth of a higher social grade, they will recur to the happy scene when, in the gloaming of life, they are about to meet the Great Prize-giver for his final award. May it then be found that, by serving God faithfully in their day and generation, they also won that amaranthine crown which will deck the brow of the redeemed for ever!

For the past thirteen years money prizes had been given by the Ragged School Union to those ragged scholars who had kept their situations at least twelve months to the satisfaction of their employers. But this, the fourteenth year of the experiment, a forward step was taken; for, in addition to a card of merit, a book was given to 140 boys and girls who had before received the money prizes, and who had since retained their situations for at least another year. This, with 395 who, as candidates for the first time, won a money prize, gave a total of 535 prize scholars.

We are ofttimes asked, What is the specific object of the committee of the Ragged School Union in giving these prizes? And has that object been attained?

Among the primary objects, one of the most important has been to show the public what Ragged Schools have achieved in rescuing boys and girls—most of them pariahs by birth—from the social

evils by which they are environed. The public learn by speech, or by pen, and, more especially, by the striking facts included in the reports of Prison Inspectors, that Ragged Schools have done a great work for society—a work of social reclamation to which no other machinery has been found applicable. But at the great gathering at Exeter Hall the public can *see* the visible results of Ragged Schools, and thus they have no longer to rely on the testimony of their promoters. Yet even there they only see the wrought, and not the rough, material—the gold without that unsightly and worthless dross which it often required rare skill to remove.

For the healthy cheeks and beaming eyes of our prize scholars are very unlike the scowling, suspicious children, whose eyes ever seemed to be glancing furtively to see whether the police were watching their movements. Now "clothed, and in their right mind," many "sit at the feet of Jesus," whilst all show that Christian love hath its echo in the heart of the vilest.

The projectors of this prize system also hoped that it would lead many to employ our boys and girls, who, without visible fruit, would have been afraid to try this social experiment; nor have they been disappointed. For the fact that so many of our scholars have given satisfaction to their masters in their first situations has led many large employers of boys to select our scholars in preference to those of any other class. And they would be led to this choice still more did they see the letters which many masters voluntarily append to the paper of questions submitted for their signature. For not rarely we read such notes as these: "No lad could be more trustworthy." "He is a very industrious boy." "I have never engaged a better boy." Thus many are led to engage ragged scholars simply because our prize system reveals the fact that the bulk reward the confidence placed in them by their con inuous good conduct.

These prizes have also a powerful reflex influence on the children still in Ragged Schools. We *know*, from constant visitation, how eagerly the large posters announcing the conditions of the prizes are scanned and discussed by the scholars. We *know* how the forthcoming prizes are talked about by the boys and girls who are seeking for posts in the labour-market. We *know* how anxious are the broken-in scholars—and their name is "Legion"—to win this, the Victoria Cross of the Ragged School Union. And we *know*, moreover, how the prize acts as a drag-chain on those restless, roving habits which mark the poor as a class, and which tend

to social failure quite as much as positive sin. It would thus seem that these prizes, appealing as they do not so much to covetousness as to that love of approbation, which is no mean element in man's mental constitution, have given a stimulus to habits of industry on the part of the ragged class, such as no other principle—save the greater one of love to God—could have supplied.

This leads to the second question. Has the object of the projectors of these prizes been effected? or are the results but another proof that theory and practice are not always allied? To this we reply, that facts, many and ofttimes unique, prove that the system has undoubtedly been a great success. By this we do not imply that the *details* have not been or cannot be further improved. For they have been altered several times as experience suggested, whilst the *principle* remained intact. Neither do we assert that these prizes have effected all that enthusiasm may have imagined. Yet, considering what fallen humanity is, and not forgetting to what temptations the ragged class are exposed, we think that this system of prizes has achieved more than there was any right to expect. As in the gospel-net good and bad fishes were snared, so we admit that many scholars have not succeeded in their first situations; but who that knows anything of the homes and habits of their parents could have expected any other result? If children of a higher class so often disappoint their relatives on their entrance into the world, we might expect it in the ragged class, seeing that the bulk have to contend not only with inbred sin, but most with such bad home-training as to cause us to regard many of their natural friends as their worst foes. When then we remember these great drawbacks, we are astonished to find that no less than 7,091 scholars have been rewarded for the first time during the past fourteen years, and that hundreds more have been rewarded for keeping their places for two, and some even for five years.

It is scarcely needful to say to those who have read the rules laid down by the Committee of the Ragged School Union, that they are so stringent that nothing but *direct falsehood* on the part of local officials could cause an unworthy youth to be enrolled in the prize-list. Nay, some of our friends have complained of the stringency of those rules, and of the trouble they necessarily entail in filling up the requisite forms. But, as the object of the Central Society is not to make a public show by the magnitude of the prizeholders, but simply to reward those who deserve it, we think that it is justified in "fencing" the system by such conditions as

will restrict the prizes to the right class. In fact, the Committee, as trustees of the public, are bound not only to see that Ragged Schools are confined to the right class, but that no scholar is rewarded for servitude who has not been diligent, punctual, and courteous. Our local friends, then, we think, are well rewarded for their trouble when they can show hundreds of boys and girls who pass muster in those respects; for it is they alone who have dug this moral gold out of the mine.

When we see that, in spite of stringent rules—even including attendance at Sunday Schools, on the part of all but domestic servants—that thousands have been found eligible to receive the prize, we think the fact is a proof that Ragged Schools have done a great work for society. And who can tell how many more—scattered as our scholars are over the wide world—owe all they possess of prudence or of piety to the lessons taught in the humble Ragged School! Such lessons they could never have acquired in the dens or hovels they call home; and thus, had it not been for Ragged Schools, they must have disseminated moral miasma far and wide, and so have poisoned generations yet to come.

Our labours, then, have well illustrated the Biblical axiom, "In *all* labour there is profit," even in this world. Nor do we doubt that very many of our prize-scholars will hear at the Great Assize as the reward of service—not merely for society, but for Christ—that greatest of prize-awards, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of thy Lord."

LIFE IN "THE KATE," WHITECHAPEL.

A LETTER was put into the hands of one of our Readers, says "The Scripture Readers' Journal," from the Master of a small Refuge at Whitechapel, under the superintendence of the Rev. W. W. Champneys, the late Rector. Its purport was to ask his kind offices in behalf of a poor diminutive urchin, ten years of age, sharp, bright, and intelligent. His mother had formerly been in good circumstances, but through his father's death and the loss of friends, she had been obliged to accept the disagreeable office of deputy landlady of a common lodging-house in "The Kate." During the day the boy remained with his mother, but at night he retired to the Refuge at Whitechapel. As Mint Street in the Borough is called "The Mint," so Kate Street and the streets in its immediate neighbourhood are called *par excellence* "The Kate." The mother, knowing well the dreadful character of the place, was most anxious to preserve her child from its contaminating influence, and so desired his admittance into some *permanent* Refuge. After making various

inquiries of the boy, the Reader expressed a desire to visit his mother. In pitiable accents the boy begged and prayed that he would not go. Almost in tears, and seeing that he was pleading without avail, he at length exclaimed, "Oh, sir, if you go down there, they will serve you as they served that gentleman this morning." Upon being asked for an explanation, he said that a man, who was quietly walking through the street, had been thrown down and violently assaulted, that he had been struck over the legs by a heavy instrument, to prevent his moving, and that when in this state his watch had been snatched away and his pockets rifled of their contents.

This story only made the Reader more anxious to see the mother. At the same time, it induced him to leave his watch and purse behind, in charge of the Schoolmistress. The Master expressed his determination to accompany him, though rather against the wish of his wife. The fears of the wife were natural enough, for only just before one of the shoe-black boxes, having been taken away by one of the boys, had been traced to a den in one of the streets comprised in the general cognomen of "The Kate;" and upon a policeman being asked to go into the house with the Master, he declined unless accompanied by other constables! Nothing daunted, however, the two set out, and soon found the street in which the mother lived. It was long and narrow, with many men and women of the most unprepossessing appearance lounging and hanging about the doors. Some were lying with their legs across the pavement—a small matter it may seem at first sight, but not so in truth, for their legs so lying abroad are used to trip up the passer-by, when out jump some roughs from a neighbouring door, and in the skirmish the stranger is robbed. Nor is it easy to avoid the pavement, the road is generally in such a dirty state.

After some little trouble they found the house in about the middle of the street. Passing through the street door, they entered what in other houses would be the front parlour, but in this was used as a kitchen, that is to say, the common hall, where the inmates lounge, cook, and take their meals. The first object that presented itself to their view affected them deeply. It was a wretched-looking woman, with an emaciated child in her arms apparently dying. The mother was out, so they remained in the kitchen, whilst a messenger was sent in quest of her. This afforded our Reader an opportunity of saying a few kind words to the poor woman. The sympathy he evinced seemed to please her, and evidently produced a good feeling towards him on the part of all present. In few and simple words he endeavoured to comfort and encourage her, by pointing out that a shepherd will often pick up a little lamb on purpose to lead its dam to follow. And so, he added, does "the good Shepherd," the Lord Jesus Christ. This little conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the mother. When the subject of her boy's position was entered into, she earnestly implored the Reader to interest himself in his behalf, and save her child. And here they were joined by a decent-looking man, who came from a small chandler's-shop on the opposite side, and who, the Reader was given to understand, was the landlord of this and other houses in the street. He united with the mother in begging him to get the boy away, "for," said he, "they are a bad lot down here, sir; there is not one of them I could say a good word for. You are welcome to come when you like, but I tell you it's no use your doing anything for them. They are

all right for a day or two, or it may be a week, if you takes them away; but they're sure to come back, I always sees their faces again. But this boy hasn't got none of their tricks yet, and if you takes him away now you'll be the saving of him. Please, sir, don't I know you?" "Very probably," replied the Reader, "but I do not remember you." "Arn't you Captain Smith, that gave us a treat in the country some years ago, I mean from the Ragged School in George Yard?" Captain Smith, it appears, had given a supper to the adult thieves, in order to discover something of their character, and to become acquainted with their ways and habits. He thus got into their good graces and even their confidence. Subsequently, passing the Hampstead Ponds, where men and boys were bathing, he recognised some of his old friends of "The Kate," and entered into conversation with them. After parting from them, he discovered he had lost a silver pencil-case, which he particularly valued. Turning back, he met one of the party, who on hearing of his loss expressed great indignation, and soon brought him to the rest of the party, who one and all stoutly denied all knowledge of the loss. He expressed his belief in that assurance, but they were evidently pained at the circumstance, and announced their determination to hunt the place till they found it; at the same time vowing vengeance against any of their companions, if discovered to be guilty of the theft. After some little search the missing pencil-case was picked up, they returned to where he was, and triumphantly handed it to him.

The Reader now desired the mother to bring the boy on the following morning to his house; and bidding adieu to the landlord, and receiving his thanks for the interest he had shown in the boy, he took his departure. The boy was most anxious to get into the Commercial Street Refuge, in order to be near his mother, but the Reader, on calling there, found there was no vacancy for him. Next morning the mother was punctual in her attendance at the Reader's house, and as the Refuge to which he proposed to take the lad, and where he had no doubt of a kind reception, was on her way home, she accompanied them thus far on the road. As they walked along, the Reader took the opportunity of asking her some questions relative to the character of "The Kate," and amongst others, as to whether the boy's fears as to the danger of his visiting the place were well grounded, and also whether his story of the attack upon the gentleman was a fact. "Yes, sir," she replied, "it's all true; there ain't scarcely a week passes over, but what two or three of those things takes place." She said, "she had formerly been a member of a Baptist chapel in the Commercial Road, but the minister being dead there was no one now who knew her. She could not often go anywhere now, but she hoped, if only her boy could be provided for, that a gentleman from Mr. Patteson (the Rector of Spitalfields) would fulfil his promise, and obtain for her a situation as domestic servant, and then she would be able to do what now she felt unable to do, to attend to religion."

They now parted. The mother returned to "The Kate," while the Reader and the boy proceeded on to St. Giles's Refuge, where, after a little resistance on the part of the lad, who wanted to return to his mother, he was left in charge of the Master, and soon became calm and reconciled to his change of domicile. In the evening of the following day the Reader went to inform the mother of her boy's reception, and to tell her the days when she might visit

him. He then inquired after the poor sick infant, and was directed to pass on through the house. This was rather nervous work, but putting on a bold front, he passed into a room out of the back yard, where he found the poor woman and the child. After some conversation with the woman on various topics, he passed into the yard, where he addressed a few solemn words to some half-dozen men and lads, but all that he said was converted by the men present, in an undertone, into subjects for laughter. After a few further words of kind remonstrance, our Reader bade them adieu, and departed, leaving "The Kate" and its inmates with a heavy heart, and commending their souls to God.

Our little friend, becoming unsettled, went to the Master or Mistress, and begged to be allowed "*to go to his mother.*" And here a most affecting scene occurred. An event had just come to the knowledge of the Master which it was his duty to break as gently as possible to the poor boy. Instead, therefore, of at once replying to his question, he asked a question or two of him. "Have you any one besides your mother who would have any care for you? any relative or friend?" "No, sir," the lad replied. "Not one?" "Not one in the world, sir." He then made known to him the sad intelligence which had but that morning reached him, that his mother had been taken ill about a fortnight previously, and conveyed to the workhouse, where she had died the day before. The effect of this news upon the poor boy may be imagined, though told with all Christian love and consideration, and softened by reference to the blessed promises to the orphan of Him who is indeed the "Father of the fatherless," and in whom "the fatherless findeth mercy." He was permitted to see the body of his deceased parent, and to attend the funeral. Speaking afterwards to our Reader on this subject, he said, "I should not have known it was mother, she was so altered;" and again, "I will be a good boy, for she told me the last time I saw her to be a good boy, and then I should not want." From the absence of all allusion to spiritual things, it is to be feared that the mother had, up to that time at least, paid little heed to the Reader's solemn warning.

An incident occurred some time since which shows the terrible character of the locality from which this poor boy was rescued. In the Playhouse Yard Night Refuge was found a young girl of but sixteen years of age, who was anxious to leave the life she had been leading, but whom, for various reasons, the Reader was unable to get placed in a "Home." Not wishing to turn her away without giving her an opportunity of retracing her steps, he took her into his own house, hoping that a short time would enable her to earn a character, by which she might be enabled to get a situation. For some time all went on well. She was much affected at times when spoken to about her soul; at family prayers she would sometimes weep, and on one occasion she could not restrain herself, and left the room in tears. Her besetting sins seemed to be a hasty temper and a proneness to petty pilfering, against which she was earnestly entreated to pray, but which she never overcame. Seven weeks thus passed away, when one Sunday afternoon she left the house as usual, as if for Church. Not returning at the ordinary time, they became anxious about her, fearing she had been tempted to stray into the parks, and our Reader started in search. Returning unsuccessful, he went into the kitchen, and it now became evident that she had deliberately

taken her leave of the house, as the Bible, Prayer-book, and latch-key lay on the table. Hoping to recover her before she again lapsed into sin, he instantly sallied forth, in company with his brother, and searched all the streets, courts, and alleys about Whitechapel, Rag Fair, &c., but in vain. It was late before they returned home, where a paper was found to the following effect, addressed to the Reader's wife:—

"Mam,

i thank you Mam and master & i thank him to for all your kinness to me, an i'm sorry to leave you, *i'm sorry for wat i done*, dont trubble to look for me i goin to do the best i can for mysel.

"Your sincere
"W. S."

The marked passage considerably puzzled the Reader, and it was not till the following day that he discovered she had entered his brother's rooms and taken some money, and had also carried off some of his wife's clothes. He again started in search of her, and set some men to watch for her at different points. For some days no trace of her could be found. At length, on the Thursday, she was descried in a street in "The Kate." Being pursued, she ran down the street, and at length entered one of the houses, into which the man in search of her was about to follow, when several females in the front room rushed towards him. One, flourishing a poker, threatened to smash his head; another, seizing a knife, swore she would "put it into him," if he dared to come in there. Shouting "Police, police! thieves!" he was soon joined by one of the force, and at a signal from him a second quickly made his appearance. But they both declared it was more than they dared do to try to enter the house; nay, it was as much as their lives were worth to attempt to do so! Nothing more was ever heard of this girl.

But such is "The Kate," and such the character of the associates from which our little boy was rescued. And it should be matter of deep thankfulness to know that at the present time there are several boys, in St. Giles's Refuge alone, who are now promising well, and who have been snatched from this infamous den, which has been aptly denominated one of the "Plague Spots" of London.

THE COBURG HOME, CHELSEA.

Of the Ragged Schools established by Miss Howell in Westminster, Pimlico, and Chelsea, an account has been published by Hatchard, in a little book called "Seed Time and Harvest." Among them there is mentioned one in Garden Street, Westminster. The room in which it was conducted soon became too small, and a larger one in Coburg Row was taken. In the midst of Miss Howell's indefatigable efforts to help the uncared-for children of the streets, the Lord was pleased, in his inscrutable providence, to lay her aside and afflict her sorely. It is remarkable that all her schools were taken up by other privileged and willing hands; and an interesting account could be given of their progress, and even increase. But we confine ourselves to Coburg Row,

Ragged School experience naturally brought to light many cases of forlorn destitution, neglect, and ill-treatment; and an earnest desire was felt to rescue and shelter a few of these "little ones," for whom not even their parents seemed to care. Oh, the wan, weary, hungry-eyed children we have seen creep into school! wondering what we summoned them for; and watching us with suspicion and fear, increased by our words and acts of kindness, so strange and new to them. The motherly character of the teacher pointed her out as the very person to bear with, and to tend such outcasts, and one after another was committed to her gentle hands. The house adjoining the school, and, in process of time, another still, was rented in addition.

Our space almost precludes detail; but we select a case or two of neglected children, "spilt like blots about the city," to whom it has been the mission, at this Home, to teach something of the "uses of their sorrow."

J. and E. W., sisters, born of Irish Roman Catholic parents, deserted by their father, who was supposed to be in America; the mother and elder sister living in and by open sin. The poor children, respectively eight and four years of age, being often shut out through the night, attracted the pity of a Christian neighbour, by whose intercession they were admitted into the Home. Their condition was terrible! The elder girl early showed symptoms of consumption; and though change of air and mild sea-breezes were resorted to, she died at twelve years. She was evidently a child of grace; patient, grateful, and affectionate. She dearly loved the Scriptures, and having two Bibles of her own—the gifts of friends—she gave the *new* one to her younger sister, with an earnest charge to study its precious truths; and bequeathed the *worn* one to her unhappy elder sister, expressing a hope that its condition would exempt it from being pledged or sold, and that in some tried and softened hour its gracious words might meet the eye and touch the conscience of the wretched wanderer.

E. W. was soon afterwards forcibly removed by her unnatural mother, to take care of her newly-born infant, and a most miserable life the poor child led. Seeking her mother from one public-house to another, and taxed far beyond her strength, with her living and restless burden, exposure and neglect soon terminated the existence of the baby, and E. W. returned to the Home. She proved a troublesome charge; the seeds of evil brought forth noisome weeds, and called for much patient toil and wary watching. She is latterly much improved, and there is strong hopes of her proving a good and faithful servant.

A. R. was discovered by the City Missionary of the district, sharing a wretched room in Chelsea, with two little sisters, an unmarried uncle, a widowed aunt with five children, and an aged grandmother. The mother of A. R., the widow of a sailor, had died a few days previously in this bare, miserable room, leaving her three children to the charge of her own mother, 73 years of age. A. R., when brought by the City Missionary to the Home, was in a sickly, pitiable condition; and the habits acquired in such an abode as she had just left may well be imagined.

The labours of the Home and Ragged School continued to be carried on with considerable inconvenience, under the same roof, until June, 1860, when diligent inquiries resulted in the discovery of the house now occupied, at 9, Manor Street, Chelsea, then to be let, and the landlord having no objection

to an exceptionably numerous family. After five years, we have still much cause to rejoice in this step, as it has been attended with great blessing. There is accommodation for forty girls, and the beds are always fully tenanted.

The greater number of the children are now paid for, some very partially, others more largely, by benevolent friends. They are admitted from the age of four years; and when deemed fit for service, suitable places are sought for them. Their needlework may challenge scrutiny; and there is always a stock of useful clothing—the fruits of their industry—on sale at the Home. Co-operation is invited: the evils around are vast and deadly; and those to whom the Lord has graciously spoken of better things are surely left here to proclaim the riches of his grace to our less-favoured fellow-creatures. It is especially the work of Jesus to pray and care for such as do neither for themselves. May the long-suffering patience he has manifested towards us teach us to echo his loving words, "How shall I give thee up? my heart is turned within me; my repentings are kindled together."

The Ragged School is still carried on in Cobourg Row, Westminster; and the room has lately been raised and ventilated by means of funds placed at the disposal of Lord Shaftesbury, and allotted to this school by the Ragged School Union. It is surrounded by innumerable courts and passages, teeming with just the class of children that we seek to inspire with such thoughts as shall "ennoble the heart's struggle," and teach them that

> "The sun, behind the cloud,
> Shines upon them, though they shiver."

PRIZE SCHOLARS' MEETING.

On Tuesday, March 19th, the fourteenth Prize Scholars' Meeting was held at Exeter Hall. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, the platform and galleries were well filled with the leading patrons and workers of Ragged Schools. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided, and was supported by the Bishop of Victoria, Lord Ashley, Hon. Cecil Ashley, Sir R. W. Carden, Rev. R. Berry, E. Crombie, R. H. Atherton, Dr. Cross, Mr. C. Moody, of Chicago, &c., &c.

After the Prize Scholars had their tea, Lord Shaftesbury took the chair, and called upon the Bishop of Victoria to open the meeting with prayer.

Mr. Gent then made the following statement:—

The Committee of the Ragged School Union have for fourteen years awarded annual prizes to the boys and girls from Ragged Schools, who have entered upon situations and have retained them for at least twelve months. The average number of prizes awarded has been 581 annually. These prizes have hitherto consisted of money and a card printed in colours, that would ornament the walls of the child's home. The card has formed a part of every prize, but the money has been limited to those children who took the prize for the first time. On the present occasion it is proposed to give prize books, with the cards, to those who have previously taken the money prize. The awards to be distributed this evening consist of 395 money and card prizes, and 140 prizes of books and cards.

The number of applicants for prizes under the conditions of last year is 595; of these 286 are boys, and 309 are girls. This is the first time in the fourteen years that the girls have been in excess of the boys. In the thirteen previous years the total number of boys was 4,402, while the girls were only 3,150; but this year the girls exceed the boys by 23. It would perhaps be difficult to furnish the exact cause of this, but the change may perhaps lead to a little wholesome competition between the boys and girls for the prizes of the current year.

The number of prizes to be distributed this evening by the noble Chairman is 535; of these the boys take 255, and the girls 280. As 395 of the prize-holders come up on this occasion for the first time, there is that number of money prizes of 7s. 6d. each; and to the remaining 140, prizes will be given in books of the value of 2s. 6d. each. The books selected are, for the girls, "Miracles of Heavenly Love in Daily Life," by A. L. O. E.; and for the boys, "Ruined Cities of the East," by the Rev. Dr. Tweedie.

The applicants for these prizes have retained their situations for periods varying from one to nine years, viz.—

414	in place	from	1	to 2	years.
116	„	„	2	„ 3	„
33	„	„	3	„ 4	„
16	„	„	4	„ 5	„
3	„	„	5	„ 9	„

The age last year was increased from seventeen to eighteen years, but only twenty-seven above the age of seventeen are present to-night to take prizes.

The ages are—

86	from	12	to	13	years.
125	„	13	„	14	„
150	„	14	„	15	„
131	„	15	„	16	„
76	„	16	„	17	„
27	„	17	„	18	„

From the returns made it appears the wages paid to these children is £124 weekly in cash; but 212 of them are domestic servants, and have food and lodging as part payment for their services, which, if estimated at 4s. per week each, would make their earnings £166 weekly, or £8,632 per year. The master of one of the boys, when giving him the character, said, "If he could find more boys as well-behaved he should be thankful; he had raised his wages five times already." Great as may be the money value of these earnings, the Committee believe the moral character acquired by this persevering industry and good conduct to be of vastly greater value. This formation of character is the great object of this prize scheme; and the Committee have reason to believe that by means of these prizes a stimulant has been given for a proper discharge of duty, and a check furnished to roving dispositions. They have also been the means of keeping up a connection between the scholar and the teacher for a more prolonged period, thus promoting the welfare of the young for the life that is, and for that which is to come. It should not be forgotten that those who come up on these occasions

to receive these prizes form but a small portion of the full number going annually from the schools to earn self-support by self-effort in the busy, bustling world of London. As, for instance, in one school, out of 70 children sent to situations in one year, only 7 made application for the prizes.

While the Committee and teachers have by these, among many other means, been trying to secure the present and eternal well-being of their scholars, they have been somewhat surprised to see in one of the public prints a letter from a Government official to the effect that Ragged Schools did not follow out by active effort in after-life the beneficent influence of their teaching. Such a statement the Committee consider a libel upon these Institutions, and would rebut it by a simple reference to these annual gatherings, and to a full scrutiny of the papers furnished for claiming the prizes given on these occasions. Such unfriendly criticisms are now, happily, seldom made; and the Committee have many proofs that they have succeeded in pointing out the way to lessen evil and in suggesting plans by which the poor can be effectively helped. And although they do not put forward these plans as perfect, yet they hesitate not to say they are deserving support, and should be encouraged.

The prizes were then distributed by Lord Shaftesbury, who addressed the prizeholders to the following effect:—

My Children,—Before I say to you one word, I will tell you something that will be very pleasant. I am not come here to make a speech, nor are you come here to hear a speech. There will be but one speech, and that is mine, this evening, which I am sure will be a great comfort to you, because I came here for the same purpose as you came here. I came to see you first, and I came to see the magic lantern afterwards. Now mind, I tell you I like a little change as well as most people, and quite as much as you do. I like sometimes to get rid of books and papers. Now I will just tell you that I heartily rejoice to see what I have seen this evening, and every returning occasion of this kind fills my heart with joy, and the heart of every one of your friends. And let me tell you that we most devoutly and sincerely give God thanks that he has so prospered this work, and that he has allowed us to see in our own day and generation the fruits of these labours; that he put into our hearts the way in which he was pleased to guide us, and that he has brought it to so successful an issue. Now I should like to know if there are any schools in this great metropolis, or any schools in this great kingdom, that can produce more true or a richer harvest of good boys and girls than we have got out of the Ragged School system. And let me tell you, my good children, we are more than repaid for all the anxiety we have endured, for all the labour we have gone through, when we see how you flourish under our care, and when we see your cheerful eyes and see your merry faces, and hear the account of your good conduct; how you have adorned the station of life to which you belong, how you have kept your places, how you have pleased your employers, how you have done honour to yourselves, and how you have gone onward in the great path of Christianity. I was very glad to hear from my friend Gent, in his Report, that in this year the girls are in excess of the boys in the matter of prizes. I will tell you this on all occasions: if the girls will give themselves any trouble, I tell you, my daughters here, and you, my sons here, whether it be here, or whether it be at home, I back the girls against the boys! And I have two sons upon the platform here to-night, and I tell them before you, that if they do not stand up

and look after their mental acquirements, their sisters will surpass them just as these girls have surpassed the boys. And I will tell you why it is no common matter. I am satisfied of this great truth, that the women form the character of the men; what the females are in a nation, so the men will be; therefore, when I find the women taking the lead, when I find them first in the path of Christianity, I have great hope for the country, and that is the reason why I like to hear it. My children,—because you know you all are my children,—I have got a very large family here in the metropolis, and I have a great many down in other districts, and I am very proud of them, and I must say that they have all answered to the care that has been bestowed upon them, and it is that which makes me thank God. Ah! that puts me in mind that there is a project on foot in connection with the new Reform Bill that the suffrage shall be given to the women. I am not going to give it to all the women, but I am going to give it to all the girls and boys of the Ragged Schools. They shall all have a vote, and they will vote for me, they will vote for Counsellor Payne, they will vote for Sir Robert Carden, they will vote for the Bishop of Victoria, they will vote for Gent, and they will vote for every good man that sits here.

Now how is it, as alluded to in the Report, how is it that men can be found who say that this Ragged School system has been a complete failure? How is it that men can be found who say that we take no care of the future career of those who are educated in our schools? Have we not for fourteen years in succession held such meetings as this, thus giving a manifest proof, contradiction, and utter denial to all these false statements? Have we not put out in service hundreds of boys and girls, nay, thousands of children, and do we not watch over them with the utmost parental care, with the most tender solicitude? I maintain that it is the grossest libel upon that noble band of men and women, the Ragged School teachers, of whom I never can speak with sufficient respect, or thank with sufficient gratitude. Why, these Ragged School teachers, these women, they are like so many mothers in Israel. Mark the solicitude, the care, the tender, devoted care,—mark the anxiety, I may say the tears that they shed for the welfare of those children committed to their charge, and then shall we be told there is no care bestowed? It is a foul and abominable calumny, and the only excuse there can be for the man who utters it—the only defence that can be made for the man who said it—is that he is utterly ignorant of the matter he talks about, and is utterly indifferent as to what he says to injure the support of, or to overthrow this great, Institution. Talk of failure, indeed! Let any one perambulate the streets of this metropolis, and see the thousands and tens of thousands of children that have not been brought within our parental care, that are not yet classed among those that are the "ragged scholars." I say, let them perambulate the streets of London and mark their wretchedness, mark their destitution, mark the crime in which they are engaged, mark the dangers that surround them, and contrast them with the scholars in the Ragged Schools, and then will they have the audacity to call it a failure? I believe that this system has been most blessed by the beneficence of God to the winning and recovery of souls for Christ. There are those children running about the streets that are not in your Ragged Schools; they are like so many wild animals, like so many wild cats, and so were you who are here to-night. The time was when you were just like wild cats too, but now if we go to your homes and look there, we shall see you sitting in the snug chimney-corner, just like one of those quiet, purring, and sweet domestic animals. You are now domesticated animals, and you are Christianized human beings, and this is the end to which you have been brought; this is the end which has been achieved by the Ragged School system; this is the system for which we pray; this is the

system we are endeavouring to spread over the length and breadth of the metropolis; and that is to be, I believe, the saving of this country, so far as the most destitute portions of our population are concerned. This system is the only one whereby we can meet the wants of the age, and the vast miseries and destitution of the country.

And now, my good children, let me entreat you to profit by the lessons that are put within your reach; address yourselves and pray for those who have not received the same amount of care and of God's providential mercy, who have not received the tender solicitude and superintendence of your excellent teachers. I say, lay it seriously to heart, improve the advantages that are given to you, remember that however poor and destitute you may be, there is no one so low but what he may, by his moral bearing and his truth, manifest by it the glory of God in that state of life in which he is found. There is a great truth, and bear this in mind, that be you high or be you low, be you rich or be you poor, you are all under God's grace; you have the opportunity by these Ragged Schools of learning; but learn to practise what you learn, and to be instructed in the ways of our Lord and Saviour, and to do your duty in that state of life to which it shall please God to call you. Let me tell you, my good children, that those who may be addressing you, and who may be raised by Providence in this world to high and prominent stations, are no greater in the sight of God, unless they discharge their duties, than the very humblest of his creatures. The time is coming when matters will not be measured by the talent, or by the ability, or by fine clothes, or by power to speak, or by being on platforms, or by listening to those upon platforms; but the time is coming when matters will be measured by those who have the truest faith, the deepest love, and the most sincere acts of obedience to their Lord and Saviour, and most devoted and strong imitation of his blessed example. Lay it seriously to heart, my boys and girls, and then you will realize the two lines of that beautiful hymn we have just sung—

> "Over the plains of sweet Canaan we roam,
> Joyfully, joyfully, safely at home!

(Prolonged applause.)

A beautiful series of dissolving views, illustrative of the journey of the Israelites to Canaan, were exhibited by John Harris, Esq., and explained by T. Brooker, Esq., both members of the Committee of the Parent Society. The views, prepared for the occasion, came out well; and it was difficult to tell who were most pleased, the scholars or the adults. Mr. Dale, of the Wesleyan Chapel, St. John's Square, played the harmonium whilst one view glided into another; and the scholars sang several of their favourite school hymns, and sang well, because all sang. The happy gathering then concluded with the Doxology and Benediction.

THE CAIRO RAGGED SCHOOL.

BY MISS M. L. WHATELY.

When I came to Egypt a few years ago, my only idea was that of establishing a girls' school, chiefly for Moslems and those of the lowest class, because it seemed that little attention had ever been turned in that direction, the Copts being easier of access. But I never confined my school to any denomination, and took all, of whatever class or persuasion, who offered, my object being solely the spread of the Gospel, and that education which is

likely to lead to the Gospel. With small means, and many and great difficulties to contend against, I struggled on, and after a time obtained the aid of an efficient and experienced missionary, Mr. J. Shakoor, who had worked in Latakia for some years, and brought high testimonials thence of his worth as an evangelist and teacher. He acted as agent for my schools, and undertook some general mission work also, and a weekly class of boys. At this time the Moslem Society were trying their plan in Cairo, which was to let a single evangelist go about the streets, and elsewhere, reading or speaking where he could get a hearing, and Mr. Shakoor's brother was working for this Society, but his acquaintance with the country made him feel that a centre was a necessary thing if a mission was to have any chance in Egypt. He also desired a school, thinking the young the most hopeful subjects n the present state of things here. He worked, however, faithfully and zealously as long as he could; but a severe illness obliging him to seek a change of air, he relinquished his situation shortly after, and joined his brother in the mission I had begun.

They opened first a book depôt, where inquirers and others could be received by one of them, and Bibles and religious works disposed of; and then a boys' school, which—commenced under peculiar difficulties, and with a mere handful of children in a place little better than a stable—is now held in a spacious room, where from seventy to eighty scholars meet daily, and more are coming in every week! They are instructed in the Bible, in English, arithmetic, &c., and are progressing as well as could possibly be expected. An evening Bible adult class is held every night in the week except Saturday, by one of the missionaries, who on Sundays makes it more of a service than on the week-days. The brothers Shakoor, being natives of Syria, have the advantage that the Arabic language, common to both Syria and Egypt, gives them, and are deeply read in Scripture, and able to interest their hearers by illustration, &c., better than Europeans could do.

Meantime the girls' school is superintended by myself and an adopted daughter, who desires to give her youth to the Lord and his work: we have native assistants, but must look over everything ourselves. We have from forty to forty-five girls at present; the larger number are Moslems, but both Copts and Greeks are among them, and all classes almost, from respectable tradesmen's children to the very poorest in their single garment and bare feet. I visit the poor women at their houses as much as I can, but as I do not see any probability of great results among grown persons of the Moslem faith just now, I give my first care to the children. The Lord has not given us the power of working miracles, and nothing but a miracle could convince large numbers of Mohammedans, while their ignorance and bigotry are both so very great. But here and there a tree which can bear fruit may be found; and as those who will believe are hidden from our eyes, we must speak to each one in hope and with prayer; I would not relax my efforts for a moment because I have but small hope of any speedy conversions. All the more I would labour in faith and patience. Nor is it a slight point to gain the friendship and good-will of those whose hatred to Christianity is greater than casual observers have any idea, because it is hidden at times by a smile, and also because if a verse is uttered they don't understand.

When I first ventured into a lane where Moslems dwelt, those of a low

class, the children threw dust and cursed; now, where known, I am treated civilly and often affectionately. Many comef or medicine, eye-water, &c., or to get hands or feet doctored, and, besides the opportunity of dropping a few words, the hard and long-untilled soil is softened by these means. Others may reap what we sow. Meantime, though it is sowing time and not yet harvest, surely my country people will not let the only English mission here languish for lack of aid, but help to extend its work. Home claims will never suffer, but a double blessing be the result of helping to sow beside all waters.

May the Lord open many hearts to lend a hand, and prosper our handiwork, knowing the glory is not to man but to God and to the glorious Gospel of Christ!

CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS.

Mr. Hartley, in his "Sunday School Statistics," says that two facts relating to the teachers of the schools in connection with the Sunday School Union, are full of encouragement. 71 per cent. of the country teachers, and 82 per cent. of the metropolitan teachers, are communicants of various Christian churches. Though this fact does not evidence the existence of all necessary qualifications in those who are thus connected, nor the absence of fitness for the office in those who are not, it affords ample ground for the conclusion that the agency employed in the work of the Sunday School is largely imbued with the spirit of earnest and consistent piety, and capable of exerting a mighty influence for good upon the young people committed to its care.

The other fact relates to the number of teachers who, having sprung from the ranks of the Sunday School, may be regarded as living illustrations of its reproductive power, and may fairly be supposed to be well acquainted with the nature of their work, and deeply interested in its promotion. 71 per cent. of the metropolitan teachers, and 80 per cent. of the country teachers connected with the Union, are reported to have been formerly scholars in Sunday Schools; the larger proportion from the provincial schools, arising doubtless from the fact that these retain, in their senior classes, a much larger number of elder scholars, who naturally rise up to engage in the work from which they have themselves realized so much good. In some of the manufacturing districts more than 90 per cent. of the present Sunday School teachers have been scholars, so that the multiplication of senior classes in the London Sunday Schools will be found one of the most effectual means of supplying the lack of teachers so extensively complained of in the present day.

One other item of statistics has been collected from the Sunday Schools in the Metropolitan and Country Unions, to which attention must be directed, namely, the number of scholars who during the previous year have come forward and given public evidence of decision for the cause of the Redeemer. It is not of course implied by this inquiry that no good has been done by Sunday School teaching, unless *this result* has been attained; on the contrary, it is well known that, in many instances, the bread cast upon the waters by the faithful teacher has not been found till after many days. At the same

time, it is believed that children, while they *are* children, may become Christians, and that those who try to bring their scholars to Jesus, and look for their decision while in early life, are the most likely to realize these hopes and expectations. Hence it has been thought that the collection of facts as to the attainment of so great an object would encourage and stimulate those who are engaged in this department of the Master's service.

The result of the inquiry has been most gratifying, showing that, though less than half the schools report any accessions to the number of youthful communicants, 6,225 scholars in schools connected with the Union joined Christian churches during the year 1864, and 6,730 in 1865. The proportion which this latter number bears to the whole of the scholars in the connected schools is *one in ninety-seven*, or *one in a hundred and fifteen* in the London Auxiliaries, and *one in ninety-three* in the country Unions. In many of the great manufacturing towns, where large numbers of elder scholars are retained in the senior classes, the proportion is considerably greater. In the town of Derby, for instance, where in some of the schools nearly half the scholars are above fifteen years of age, *one out of thirty-two* in the year 1864, and *one out of forty-three* in 1865, were reported to have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

When it is remembered that a large number of our scholars now remain ten or fifteen years in the Sunday School, although the proportion who are brought to decision in one year is not so large as could be desired, yet at the same time it is sufficiently large to excite our gratitude for what, by the blessing of God, is being accomplished.

If there is joy among the angels when one sinner repents, what rejoicing must there have been when in one day three thousand souls were added to the Church; and surely we are called upon to rejoice and give thanks over the 6,730 Sunday scholars who, in one year, confessed before men their attachment to the Saviour. While, however, we render unto God the glory which is his due, let us take encouragement to put forth redoubled efforts, and unite in earnest prayer, that a still greater and ever-increasing harvest of precious souls may be gathered from the Sunday School into the fold of the Good Shepherd, until at last "a great multitude, which no man could number," stand before the throne, crying with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

LIVERPOOL SHOE-BLACK BRIGADE.

THE boys of the Liverpool Shoe-black Brigade were recently treated to their annual tea-party in Hope Hall, when sixty-two of the boys received a substantial tea. The lads were dressed in the bright scarlet uniform of the brigade, and were attended by their band.

A letter was read from Mr. T. S. Raffles, the stipendiary magistrate. He said:—"It is, I think, a matter for great congratulation that I have not had one of your boys before me during the past year; and it speaks well for your management of the rough material from time to time brought under your influence. I am sorry to learn that your excellent society is in debt to its

treasurer. I enclose my mite towards its liquidation with much pleasure, and hope it will soon be cleared off."

The Hon. Secretary then read the annual report, of which the following is an abstract:—

At the close of last year there remained on the books of the institution 56 boys, and there have been admitted during the year 322; together, 378. Of these there have been placed in situations, 34; gone to sea, 2; Training Ship, 6; Royal Navy, 3; emigrated, 1; restored to parents, 12; discharged, 81; left of their own accord, 179—total, 318; remaining on the books, 60. It will be seen from the above statement that the society has been the means of doing increased good amongst this class of boys during the year. It is necessary to explain, with regard to those boys who leave of "their own accord," that many of them were in the society several months, and that none have applied for readmission. In many instances it has been ascertained that they have obtained situations for themselves. The restoration of boys to their parents forms a pleasing feature in the work of the institution. Of those who have obtained situations through the efforts of the society, the Committee continue to receive satisfactory reports. The Committee have great pleasure in mentioning that William Rooney, one of the boys recommended by this society to the training ship *Indefatigable*, received the silver medal of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society for nobly jumping overboard, at the risk of his own life, to save one of his shipmates who had fallen into the river. The Committee would also mention that the captain of this vessel speaks in the highest terms of the general good conduct of the boys received from this institution.

At the commencement of the winter session, the inadequacy of the rooms in the Home, Peter's Lane, for the use of the evening school, caused the Committee to look out for more commodious premises for this purpose, and they succeeded in securing the use of one of the large rooms of the College Lane Infant Ragged School, close to, where the school has since been conducted on two evenings in the week. The Committee have received a notice to quit the premises now occupied as the Home, but have not yet succeeded in finding a house suitable for the purposes of the institution.

The amount of subscriptions and donations shows an increase of £17 7*s.* 4d., the total sum being £212 7*s.* 8d., against £195 0*s.* 4d. received the previous year. There has been an increase in the money received from the boys for the use of uniforms, boxes, brushes, and blacking, the amount received having been £87 10*s.* 5d., against £75 11*s.* 11d., showing an increase of £11 8*s.* 6d.; and for breakfasts, dinners, teas, &c., £96 10*s.* 5d., against £110 14*s.* 4d. for the previous year, being a decrease of £14 3*s.* 11d. The whole expenditure of the year amounts to £421 0*s.* 3d., leaving a debt of £14 9*s.* 5d.

Mr. C. Aspinall, the Chirman, after expressing his gratification in being present, referred to the numerous societies in Liverpool intended to alleviate and to elevate the masses of the people, necessarily gathered together in a commercial metropolis like Liverpool. Many people, who indulged more in the language of imagery than he felt himself capable of doing, had spoken of Liverpool being studded with its charitable institutions almost as completely as the heavens are studded with the stars that twinkle there. But, however that might be, as the stars no doubt answered all the

ends which Providence designed them to accomplish, the analogy between them and the charitable institutions of Liverpool could only hold partially good, if good at all, inasmuch as it was a literal and absolute fact that, notwithstanding the number of charities and charitable people, the amount of want and vice and degradation in Liverpool was still so overwhelmingly great as to make us sometimes feel that our labour is almost in vain in stemming a torrent which seems, as time runs on, rather to gather strength than to be in any way prevented from taking its downward course, and dragging the degraded part of the population with it. But the philanthropy of Liverpool, great as it undoubtedly is, is not equal to the necessities of the place, and therefore there was an absolute obligation thrown upon people to give more than they had given already, and an absolute obligation upon a vast number of people who had never given before to give something now. Let those work now who had never worked before, and those who had worked work now all the more. He always deplored at meetings of a philanthropic character the absence of speakers, and he deplored even more the absence of listeners. He regretted that it was so difficult to get people to attend meetings which had a useful object in view, and he specially deplored the small audience collected on this occasion out of a population of a half-million. In an interview which he had that day with the worthy stipendiary magistrate, Mr. Raffles expressed his regret at not being able to attend the meeting, and had sent in his letter of apology what he called his mite, to the object of the society. That mite was a sovereign; and if all who could not be present had done likewise, the absent audience might have been more useful than the present. The Chairman then congratulated the boys on their good conduct during the past year, and he hoped they would so conduct themselves as to scorn the imputation of being brought into any court of justice on any charge whatever. He thanked God for the philanthropic efforts of the friends of the society, and he trusted that the boys would always feel a deep debt of gratitude to those who were now so anxious for their welfare, temporal and eternal. He reminded them that though their occupation might be considered menial, respectability was not confined to any occupation, and that the honour lay not so much in what we did as in the way in which we did it.

"Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all true honour lies."

It was quite within the prospect of those boys to enter upon more remunerative occupations when they got older and more suited for them. In the meantime they should show their gratitude for what had been done for them, and he hoped they would go on and prosper.

The Poet's Corner.

OUR BATTLE.

"Then was there war in the gates."—Jud. v. 8.

I.—The Battle-field.

We all have a battle to fight,
A combat to lose or to win;
A war with the cohorts of Satan,
A strife with a world of sin.

A battle from cradle to manhood,
A conflict which lasteth all time,
A warfare in darksome hovels
With fever, cholera, crime.

A combat in den and alley,
With blasphemy, vice, and dirt;
A war where Christ's warriors must evermore be
With the sword of the Spirit expert.

A war with perthouses and ginshops,
A battle with ignorance grim;
For even the nursling draineth
The woe-cup filled to the brim.

A conflict with vices which give
To youth the worn visage of age,
And carve on the forehead of manhood
Thick furrows of anguish or rage.

A war with the haters of Bibles,
Whom Jesus would drag from his throne;
A strife wherein myriads perish—
By their own poison'd arrows o'erthrown.

II.—The Witnesses.

Nor fight we this battle alone,
For three potent hosts cheer us on;
And hark! how with trumpet-toned voice
They say, "To the combat—begone!"

Angels point to the dungeons of woe,
And tell how life's battle was lost;
As moans of despair wildly thrill on the ear,
They bid us beware of the cost.

The Saved, as victorious they stand,
A-wearing the amaranth crown,
Speak of the rich crop reaped in heaven
From seed which on earth they had sown.

And Jesus our Brother and King
Tells how this great battle was fought,
Since none wear the conqueror's crown
Save those whom his succour have sought.

'Tis faith nerves the arm for the fray,
And fixes its eye upon heaven;
Thus fighting for God in Christ's strength,
None find that in vain they have striven.

March 12th. H.

The Children's Gallery.

THE TWO FIELDFARES.

A BISHOP who had for his arms two fieldfares, with the motto, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" thus explained the matter to an intimate friend:—

Fifty or sixty years ago, a little boy resided at a village near Dillengen, on the banks of the Danube. His parents were poor; and almost as soon as the boy could walk, he was sent into the woods to pick up some sticks for fuel. When he grew older, his father taught him to pick the juniper-berries, and carry them to a neighbouring distiller, who wanted them for making hollands. Day by day the poor boy went to his task, and on his road he passed by the open windows of the village-school, where he saw the schoolmaster teaching a number of boys of about the same age as himself. He looked at these boys with feelings of envy, so earnestly did he long to be among them. He was quite aware it was in vain to ask his father to send him to school, for he knew that his parents had no money to pay the schoolmaster; and he often passed the whole day thinking, whilst he was gathering the juniper-berries, what he could possibly do to please the schoolmaster, in the hope of getting some lessons. One day, when he was walking sadly along, he saw two of the boys belonging to the school trying to set a bird-trap, and he asked one what it was for. The boy told him that the schoolmaster was very fond of fieldfares, and that they were setting the trap to catch some. This delighted the poor boy, for he recollected that he had often seen a great number of these birds in the juniper wood, where they came to eat the berries, and he had no doubt but he could catch some.

The next day the little boy borrowed an old basket of his mother, and when he went to the wood, he had the great delight to catch two fieldfares. He put them in the basket, and, tying an old handkerchief over it, he took them to the schoolmaster's house. Just as he arrived at the door he saw the two little boys who had been setting the trap, and with alarm he asked them if they had caught any birds. They answered in the negative; and the boy, his heart beating with joy, gained admittance in the schoolmaster's presence. In a few words he told how he had seen the boys setting the trap, and how he had caught the birds, to bring them as a present to the master.

"A present, my good boy!" cried the schoolmaster; "you do not look as if you could afford to make presents. Tell me your price, and I will pay it to you, and thank you besides."

"I would rather give them to you, sir, if you please," said the boy.

The schoolmaster looked at the boy who stood before him, with bare head and feet, and ragged trousers that reached only halfway down his naked legs. "You are a very singular boy!" said he; "but, if you will not take money, you must tell me what I can do for you, as I cannot accept your present without doing something for it in return. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"O yes!" said the boy, trembling with delight, "you can do for me what I should like better than anything else."

"What is that?" asked the schoolmaster, smiling. "Teach me to read," cried the boy, falling on his knees. "O dear, kind sir, teach me to read!"

The schoolmaster complied. The boy came to him at his leisure hours, and learned so rapidly, that the schoolmaster recommended him to a nobleman residing in the neighbourhood. This gentleman, who was as noble in mind as in birth, patronized the poor boy, and sent him to school at Ratisbon. The boy profited by his opportunities; and when he rose, as

he soon did, to wealth and honours, he adopted two fieldfares as his arms.

"What do you mean?" cried the bishop's friend. "I mean," returned the bishop, with a smile, "that the poor boy was MYSELF."

Correspondence.

FRUIT OF A MOTHER'S MEETING.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—I transmit the following example of the faith and prayer of a poor woman who belongs to the Mothers' Meeting in Britannia Street, thinking that it may interest and encourage many of my co-workers in Ragged Schools:—

Whilst recently speaking to the mothers from Ruth, I took occasion to show them the providential hand of God even over the minutest affairs of his children. This led us *almost naturally* into the privilege of prayer.

One of the poor women, Mrs. G., immediately broke out, "O Miss H., how true that is, that God only wants heartfelt prayer. A little while ago, three or four weeks, when they came and told me that my little boy was gone to the hospital and had broken both his legs, I thought I should never see him alive again, for I felt sure I could not carry my baby there, a distance of four miles, weak as I was. But, however, I took him up in my arms, and away I went, praying all the way that God would give me strength to see my child again. And oh, didn't he hear me then, for I walked as quick as I could, and prayed from the bottom of my heart, and although Joe (her husband) kept saying, 'Depend we shall not see the child alive,' yet I didn't heed him, miss, a bit, for, I thought, I have been told at the Mothers' Class to ask God to help me, and now I'll try it." She did try, and walked the eight miles without a complaint; for "the Lord did hear me," she said, "and so I'll always trust him again. But O Miss H., I should never have known anything about this but for coming here."

I have given this in her own words, as nearly as I could remember, half an hour after she spoke. She is quite unable to read, or even, I believe, to tell her letters, yet she never omits giving me her two texts every Monday. May the Lord set his seal to the work, that she and all other members of our Mothers' Meetings may become his children. Yours, &c.,

M. H.

HONOUR IN A BOY THIEF.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—I cannot help drawing your attention to a somewhat remarkable instance of honour in a boy thief who was connected with the Park Walk School. It was fully reported in the daily papers of Dec. 11, 1866.

One of the scholars had been improperly convicted of theft and sentenced to three months with hard labour. A number of the boys assured our Superintendent, Mr. Bannister, that the boy convicted was really innocent; and

moreover the actual culprit came forward and avowed his guilt. Mr. Bannister made immediate application to Mr. Selfe, the magistrate at Westminster Police Court, the boy who was actually the thief accompanying him, and confessing his crime to the magistrate. Acting under the advice of Mr. Selfe, a memorial to the Home Secretary was drawn up, when, after investigation, the innocent prisoner was released.

Such an occurrence proves the value of this Ragged School to the district, because the relatives and numerous boy friends of the young prisoner knew no one to whom they could better apply in distress than to the Night School teacher. The real thief also knew that his teacher taught and expected the truth; consequently, although only moral force was used, he came forward and told the truth before a crowded court, although by so doing he criminated himself. May we not hope for the thorough reform of a boy like this?

I remain, &c.,

Park Walk Ragged School. JOHN J. WHEELER.

Notices of Meetings.

BIRMINGHAM.

THE Mayor of Birmingham recently convened a meeting to consider the alleged abolition by recent judicial decision of the exemption of schools and charities from assessment to the relief of poor, &c. There was a large attendance. His worship explained that the decision referred to was the one pronounced in the House of Lords in the appeal "Jones and others *v.* the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company." The legal adviser of the overseers has given an opinion that that decision fixed the law of the case, and the Mayor said if this was to be enforced it would be a new and oppressive tax, not only on the charities of the town, but of the United Kingdom.

The meeting was addressed by several of the principal ministers and laymen of Birmingham. Ultimately, the following resolutions were passed:—"That the assessment to the relief of the poor of schools supported either wholly or partially by voluntary subscriptions is most inexpedient, because it will seriously retard the spread of education, which is the most effectual remedy against improvidence and pauperism." "That hospitals and other charitable institutions of a similar character, the operations of which tend to diminish the poor-rates, ought to enjoy exemptions from such rates, and to rate them would greatly diminish their efficiency in this respect; and, while the additional sum gained will be inappreciable to the rate-payers generally, it will subject that small section of them who support such charitable institutions to an increased and increasing burden, which is unfair and impolitic." "That the alleged abolition by judicial decision of the exemption which had been enjoyed for more than two centuries demands the immediate interference of the Legislature, and that a committee be formed for the purpose of procuring an Act to continue the former exemption, and of taking such other steps as may seem to them desirable."

DRUID STREET.

THE twentieth annual meeting in connection with the above school was recently held in the schoolroom, Neckinger Road, Bermondsey, the chair being occupied by Samuel Bevington, Esq.

After tea, which was partaken of by upwards of 200 persons,

Mr. PENNY, the Secretary, read the report for the past year, which expressed the regret which was felt at the resignation of Mr. W. E. Rogers, who had held the office of Treasurer for the last two years, and to whom they owed their thanks for the interest he had taken in the affairs of the school. The vacancy had been filled by the election of Mr. S. Bevington. The report also stated that the average attendance in the day school was 234, and the number on the books 672. Since the establishment of the schools in 1858, there had been admitted 4,574. The average attendance in the evening school was 34. In the Sunday evening school there were 63 boys and 80 girls, with an average attendance of 13 teachers; and in the Sunday afternoon school 50 boys and 76 girls, with an average attendance of 9 teachers. The total working expenses for the year were £120 4s. 3d.; receipts, £115 5s. 9d., thus leaving a balance of £4 18s. 6d. due to the Treasurer. The annual excursion took place last September, when 160 children were taken to Chislehurst, and those who were too young to go were provided with tea on the following day, the expenses having been defrayed by the exertions of the teachers.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. E. J. Hytche, Rev. R. M. Martin, Mr. Easty, Revs. L. Tugwell, S. Lees, and T. H. Tarlton.

FOX COURT.

On the evening of Thursday, the 14th ult., the parents of the children attending these schools had their annual treat in Gray's Inn Hall, kindly lent for the seventh time by the benchers for that purpose. Through the liberality of friends a hot supper had been provided of roast beef, plum pudding, coffee, and tea, and upwards of 360 of the poor people again gladly responded to the invitations. The party assembled at seven o'clock, and when grace had been sung, the teachers and friends acted as waiters and waitresses on the occasion. The pleasure of the entertainment was considerably enhanced by the music of the band of the E division of police, who again gratuitously volunteered their services.

Shortly after eight o'clock, when the supper had concluded, and the thanksgiving had been sung, Smith Spencer Wigg, Esq., bencher of the inn, took the chair.

Amongst other speakers, Mr. H. W. Elcum, Treasurer of the schools, impressed upon the parents the importance of an example of sobriety and industry. He also begged of them to allow nothing to prevent their attending the house of God. Judge Hale, a most eminent lawyer, and above all a Christian, once said, "I have through my life observed that my success in my weekly pursuits has been furthered or checked by my way of observing the previous Sabbath." They should not be led away by a notion of their need of relaxation. The relaxation which they would get away from God's house would not equal that which they would receive from attending it. One of their friends had advised them to get their children into the Fox Court Ragged School. That was a good thing, but they should also try and get them out too. He thought they were greatly indebted to the Chairman's kindness in presiding, and to the benchers for so kindly granting the use of that fine hall for the seventh time.

Mr. Ralph Handcock (Hon. Sec. to the schools) drew the parents' attention to the meetings specially arranged for them —on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. There was also a penny bank, a free lending library, and a clothing fund, particulars of which would be found in the circulars distributed about the hall.

The Chairman remarked that many of the men whose portraits graced that hall, had risen from the humblest ranks. He exhorted the parents to let their children have the same opportunity, by sending them to the Ragged Schools, and then getting them out again and into better. The best way in which they could thank the benchers for the use of that hall was by sending their children more regularly, and in greater numbers, to the Fox Court Ragged School.

Papers, Original and Selected.

WHY THE POOR NEGLECT PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Holy Scripture teems with proofs that our Divine Master was especially "anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor." Hence, in furthering his great mission, he mostly chose poor men as evangelists and apostles: and the bulk of his flock, whether he preached on the shores of Galilee or on the slopes of Olivet, were of the destitute or outcast classes. Few of the rich or the noble cared to listen to his earnest teachings; or, when they did, it was only to sneer at his estimate of human grandeur, or to misconstrue his grand doctrine, that God is higher than Cæsar, into disloyalty to the emperor.

The same fact is prominent in Church history. Even in apostolic times the poor were the most active members of the Church. For though, through the grace of God, there were true believers in Cæsar's household (Phil. iv. 22), yet, when James regarded the aggregate of Christians, he was constrained to ask, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?" So was it in the beginning; and so the rule continued throughout Church history; for manual labourers presented the brightest specimens of that loving godliness which is the best of sermons. Unhappily, however, this law appears to have changed in England, and the bulk of our manual labourers seem now to be estranged from Christianity. We have but to notice congregations as they issue from our various churches and chapels on the Lord's-day to perceive that the majority belong to the middle class. As a rule, mechanics and artisans do not mingle in the "great congregation;" whilst an immense majority of the ragged and the forlorn refrain from attending the very place where they haply might have found that soul-rest which wealth can never bestow. Doubtless, too many of the affluent members of society attend public worship simply because it is the fashion—that unwritten, but most potent law—of their circle; or because, as in the case of our thronged "ritualistic" churches, they are attracted by the novelty of seeing Popish rites performed, and hearing Popish doctrines promulgated in a Protestant church. But whatever be the inferior motives which cause the well-to-do classes to attend public

worship, it is clear that the *public opinion* of the lower strata of society is in favour of absenteeism, and thus for our poorer brethren to stay away from public worship wears the stamp of fashion.

At a recent conference between representative workers and ministers, many reasons were assigned—some political, but mostly social—for non-attendance at public worship. But, seeing that many working men and women are communicants, in fact, that they constitute no small section of the earnest workers for Christ engaged in Ragged Schools, we think that the real cause of absence may be discovered in that "evil heart of unbelief" which is the base of irreligion both in rich and poor. One fact that came under our own cognizance leads us to this inference. Some time ago the teacher of Blandford Mews (now York Mews) Ragged School registered the nominal creed of the parents. The mothers of 156 scholars were thus tested, when 56 said that they were of "no religion." When asked the reason, they replied, "We have too much to do to provide for the present to think about the next world."

That it is really indifference to religion, rather than want of fitting dress, or antagonism to that spirit of caste with which some religionists are charged, which cause church-absenteeism, many facts prove. Thus the Rev. Edward White, of Kentish Town, recently registered the reasons given by mechanics for non-attendance at public worship. Among these causes were the following:—"1. I like to walk out on Sundays to see the works of the Creator. 2. The church is hot and close, and I like to get into the fresh air. 3. The world is God's house. I can worship God anywhere. 4. What's the use of going to listen to a man reading a discourse? I could do that as well as him. 5. I can read and pray at home quite as well as at church. 6. I work hard all the week. Sunday is the only day I can be with my family. 7. Sunday is the only day I've got to attend to my garden. 8. I mend my children's shoes on Sundays. 9. I go to see my daughter, who is in service, on Sundays. 10. The sermons are dull, and the ministers want talent. 11. On Sunday mornings I attend to my private business; in the afternoon and evenings I rest. 12. I want to read the newspaper on Sundays. 13. I wouldn't go to be a hypocrite. 14. If I go I cannot have my pipe, which I enjoy after a week's work. 15. My dress is not good enough to go in. 16. They preach, but very few of them practise. 17. When I've got the will to go, I'll go. 18. Going to church won't carry me to heaven. 19. It's all done

to frighten the people, and to keep them down. 20. I had enough of religion and imprisonment at the Sunday-school. I went to church to get married, and go there to christenings; and that's enough for me."

If such absenteeism be the practice of what may be regarded as the aristocracy of the manual labourers, the lower strata of society are still more "conspicuous by their absence." Want of fitting dress is the usual reason given; but many more echo the answer often given, "We don't go to church or chapel *cos* we are not wanted!" In ascertaining the cause of their non-attendance at public worship, the City Missionary who visits the navvies employed on the Thames Embankment recorded these quaint reasons:—

"*E.* said to me, in the hearing of his mates, 'No, I won't go to church or chapel; don't suit me, or the likes o' me; got no toggery fit to go in among big fellows. If they saw me inside in this trim, they'd sneeze at me in a jiffy.' *F.* 'Right you are again, mate. You'd be snubbed, sure enough, if you appeared in your blouse and jerry among them chaps that go to church to be in the fashion.' *G.* 'No, I won't go to them churches and places. Let me see, how long must it be?—oh, it's a long time! some years, as I reckon on, since I must 'a been on the inside of a church; I'm on the outside often enough, I guess (a general laugh); and then it was to get spliced to my wench.' *H.* 'No, my toggery is too shaky to go in among well-dressed folks. So I goes for a blow in the New Cut.' Then came in quick succession from all sides such remarks as—'Yes, a chap would be sneezed at.' 'He'd be stuffed into a corner.' 'That old dame of a pew-opener would keep you out of a seat, if you didn't tip her a tanner.' 'The parson, too, reads his preaching. I don't want his reading. I can read a bit as well as he, p'raps. Now, answer me this: if reading a sermon is preaching it, then reading a newspaper is preaching what it speaks about.'"

Yet, happily, even this rough class can be induced to attend the public means of grace when the plans adopted suit their habits. Thus navvies and costermongers, nay, the veriest outcasts of society, flock to the services held in theatres and music halls. Very attentive are they to the preacher's exhortations; whilst not only the eye glistens but the heart beats almost audibly when some "arrow shot at a venture" reaches the heart. When, too, Revivalistic hymns are sung to tunes to which they have been familiar from boyhood, their singing springs warm from the heart. After some of the Thames navvies had been induced to attend a service at Victoria

Theatre, their City Missionary thus recorded their opinions on the subject. These views are properly given in their own racy vernacular :—"'The parson,' says *C.*, 'went on t'other Sunday grand at that theatre service; and he seemed to be a decent sort of chap, too.' *D.* quickly interrupts, and asks *C.*, 'Did the parson read his sermon, and poke his nose into it?' *C.* 'No, he did nothing of the sort. As far as I could judge, he was up to his business. He went ahead; he knew what he had to say; it appeared to be all at his fingers' ends.' *D.* 'Then he'll do. I wouldn't mind going a time or two to hear that parson myself. I likes to hear one of that stamp—a chap as can rattle out what he's going to say.' *B.* 'I'll go with you next time. Mind as you don't go without me.' *C.*, encouragingly. 'No, that I won't; and if you goes, you'll be as snug as a bug in a rug.'"

But we should not give a fair statement of the reasons for non-attendance at public worship if one fact were omitted. It is a painful fact that, if the whole adult population of London were led by the Holy Spirit to attend public worship on any given Sunday, our churches, chapels, and preaching-rooms could not accommodate more than a moiety of the number. Nor, unhappily, does the metropolis show much improvement in the space provided for public worship. Thus, in 1851, when the ecclesiastical census was taken, the total sittings provided by all denominations—orthodox or heretical—were 698,549, with a population of 2,362,236. In the summer of 1865, with a population estimated by the Registrar-general at 3,015,494, the sittings were found to have increased to 917,895. It is scarcely necessary, however, to say, that though church and chapel accommodation has since 1851 much increased, yet the actual deficiency is greater than 14 years ago. Mr. Horace Mann estimated that 58 per cent. of the population could attend public worship every Sunday! Now, taking this estimate as a basis of calculation, it would appear that whilst 669,514 persons could not be accommodated in 1851, no less than 831,387 could not find admittance had they been compelled to attend public worship on any given Sunday in 1865.

Facts like these have led us to watch over and to aid the "Ragged Church" movement from the very first. We are glad, then, to find that in 88 Ragged Schools—or above a moiety—services for the very poor are held every Lord's-day. So much are they appreciated by the class for whom they are intended, that the attendance is 5,688, or 64 per Ragged Church. Above one-third are

aided by the Ragged Church Union. Many are conducted by City Missionaries; but the largest are superintended by those voluntary evangelists who illustrate the prophecy, "They shall build my city, and shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts" (Isa. xlv. 13).

We should be glad to see similar services conducted in every Ragged School—not assuredly to supplant, but as an addition to our Sunday-night Schools. We can testify, from fifteen years' personal experience in this field of labour, that not only have the destitute and the outcast gladly attended this means of grace, but that the good Spirit of God has led many a forlorn one to find rest in Jesus. These, humanly speaking, would never have learnt that Christ is the only key to the Father's heart, had it not been for the evangelists engaged in our Ragged Schools.

Our earnest prayer then is, that not only more Ragged Schools may be consecrated to this missionary work among adults, but that the Holy Spirit would thrust more labourers, fully equipped, into this path of service. Then will the ancient promise be literally fulfilled (Isa. xxix. 19), "The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel."

CHILDREN'S MISSION.

From the *Revival* we glean the following particulars of a novel movement at Peckham for the direct evangelization of the children of the poor. Similar meetings are also held in Gray's Yard and Marylebone Court Ragged Schools. Conducted as these meetings are by Christian women full of love to souls, they have attracted large numbers of juveniles; and we pray that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, many young ones may be won to Jesus.

Having been informed of the meetings for children held by Mr. C. R. Wright, a converted comic singer, in his own house, 5, St. Mary's Terrace, Peckham, I felt solicitous that my dear pupils should hear him, and took them to a meeting held by him. It was a beautiful and touching sight to see the joy with which the dear children received the word. Seeing the limited accommodation which his small house afforded for so many people and children, I was thankful that the Lord had given me the opportunity of offering him a larger room at my house, of which he has availed himself for the Master's service on Sunday nights, continuing his own meetings as usual at his residence.

I was not surprised to find our Lord working by one who had been so great an instrument in Satan's hands, since he chooses the "base" as well as the "weak." But I was surprised that for two years Charles Wright had been maintaining these children's meetings entirely out of his own slender weekly earnings; and that, notwithstanding repeated visitations of sickness

to himself, his wife, and children, and that during that time six tea-meetings had been almost given by him to the parents and children, averaging from forty to seventy at each. Major L—— repeatedly proffered assistance for the two last, but it was deemed expedient to decline it until his friend should visit Peckham and see the work. Recently, however, Major L——, knowing our intention of giving soup to the children, insisted on showing his Christian sympathy; and his donation was handed over to me by Mr. Wright. This, with 1s. a week offered by Mr. —— for the same purpose, enabled us to commence giving soup every Wednesday evening to those who came to the meeting, numbering about fifty to sixty men, boys, and girls, many out of work and in a state of semi-starvation. This brings in many to hear the word whom otherwise we could not reach. We feel that our Lord gives us a precedent in feeding "the multitude" who "followed not because they saw the miracles, but did eat of the loaves." The Lord grant that many more poor souls may be thus caught in the Gospel net out of the ocean of sin which surrounds us.

We found it needful to open a free evening school for lads and men on Monday evenings. Great influence is gained over them by this, and in yielding all our powers of mind and body to our Master's service, and in being "all things" to them, we find the Lord present to bless. If any would come and see for themselves they would understand the work more fully. We should be glad to see them on any of the following evenings:—

Monday evening—School at seven o'clock; lads and men.
Wednesday evening—Lecture and soup supper, six o'clock.
Sunday evening—Addresses to unconverted, half-past six o'clock.
Tuesday evening—Addresses to children, half-past six o'clock.
Friday evening— Ditto ditto

The regular attendance of the children has been about forty. The right, intelligent, interested expression of their faces, and their unwavering attention, have told us that they are receiving his word with gladness. During the last three weeks I have brought the subject to bear more emphatically on their own souls' interests. After the lecture, Mr. Wright and I have pleaded with them, and with the Lord for them.

Five weeks ago four dear girls stayed back weeping bitterly under conviction of their sinfulness. Jesus was with us to save, and we have had joy in these dear ones ever since. The enemy is on their track, and three of them are now prevented attending the meetings they prize more than ever by circumstances over which they have no control. Not a night has passed now for some time without souls being "brought nigh." An aged woman recently, at St. Mary's Terrace meeting, fell on her knees and cried aloud for salvation. The boys have manifested much feeling; we have seen that the Lord was "bringing to the birth," and we had a week of wrestling for the needed outpouring of the Spirit, and pleading the promise, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not give strength to bring forth?"

We expected our Master's presence to save on the Sabbath night. In our foolishness we thought to have a full meeting in answer to prayer, but we had less than half our usual numbers. We saw our faith was being tested, but we still felt the Lord was about to work gloriously, contrary to appearances. The meeting had not long commenced when one and then

another child rose to leave. I went out and spoke to them; they could give no reason why they would go; some even wished to stay, only thought "as the others went, they would go." They all came in again with me, and stayed on. We saw it was a device of Satan's to harass us and hinder the word being spoken. The meeting was concluded, the dismissal given, but no one stirred; there was silence. One looked at another; all seemed held by an invisible power, and they knew it not. I gave some tracts into the hands of some I felt must go, and motioned to them to leave.

Thus by families is the Lord pouring out his Spirit upon us and bringing us along on our way. We are bowed down with a sense of our nothingness, for the Lord took the dear souls, and cut his work short without our poor efforts. Oh, he can well do his work without us, but since he has been graciously pleased to use us, we desire to be "in labours more abundant." Pray that the Lord will open up our way, and enable us to labour on here and anywhere when a door may open for us. I trust our dear brothers and sisters will take courage and labour more earnestly for the little ones. Think how easily little needles are attracted by the magnet, while the larger lie unmoved. Jesus "waits to be gracious." "Feed his lambs."

MARIA GARNHAM.

LUCKNOW RAGGED SCHOOL.

NOT only in Australia, Italy, and Egypt are there flourishing Ragged Schools, but the same machinery has been introduced into at least one great town of India. Memorable for its defence by the great Christian General Havelock, it bids fair to become equally memorable as the city where the first Ragged School was planted on Hindoo soil. May its manifest success lead other missionaries to copy the example thus set. So will that land of idolatry be led to "cast its idols to the moles and to the bats," and to worship the One God and his anointed Son.

The Ragged Girls' School, Lucknow, was opened in the verandah of one of the missionaries' houses, on June 23, 1860. There was much to discourage at its commencement, the education of females being an unheard-of novelty in that Mohammedan city: and the missionary's wife was frequently met by the objection, "It is not the custom in our country to teach *girls*; what good can *women* do?"

Only four children came the first day, but in the course of the week they brought four others, and before three months had passed there were twenty-eight little Mohammedan and Hindoo girls in regular attendance. They were from the lowest caste, all other girls being kept strictly confined in their own houses. They are taught by a native Christian young woman (Lucy), under the constant superintendence of the missionary's wife.

An old Mohammedan woman is employed to go round each morning to bring the younger ones, and each child is washed and dressed by her before coming into the school-room. The children show much intelligence, and come very eagerly to school; even in case of sickness it is difficult to persuade some of them to remain at home. They are taught to read their own language in the native and Roman characters, and to sew. The elder ones

make their own clothes, which consist of a print petticoat and jacket. They also learn a text from the Bible each day, and the first class repeat the "Lord's Prayer," the "Ten Commandments," their "Duty Towards God," their "Duty Towards their Neighbour," and part of a "Catechism of Scripture Truths." "Peep of Day," which has been translated into Hindostani, is read and explained to them; and the hymns, &c., which they have learned would be no discredit to any English child.

Some of their heathen mothers come and sit by to hear what their children are taught, and in the streets, or at doorways of their houses, these little ones are sometimes heard repeating over to each other the hymns and texts they have learned at school; so that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" the truths of the Gospel are spoken, and come perhaps with less prejudice to the parents' ears than when spoken by a foreign missionary.

We subjoin the translation of a letter received from Lucy, the native teacher:—

"My Dear Mem Sahib,—I have found your letter, and very happy am. I sorrow made that I have not sent your honour a letter in return sooner. Beloved Mem Sahib, by God's grace, I am very well, and I very much remember your honour, but I am sorrowful that in this world I shall never see your honoured selves again, but one day will come when in heaven we all with one another (all together) shall stay, again never one from another to be separated. I am resting in hope that that day will come quickly, that I may leave this world of affliction, and enter into the heaven of joy. How happy I shall be that day, with our beloved '*Salvation Giver*,' the Lord Jesus Christ. We are entirely sinners, and so without strength, that if God does not give us strength, then we quickly fall into sin. Our Saviour is a great strong one. I for this thing am very happy that the Sahib has written to me such good counsel, and that the Sahib me remembers in his prayers; because of this my heart is much comforted.

"I am very happy, Mem Sahib, in doing my school work, and every day I teach God's word. Seven girls can read in the Bible to the end of the third chapter of St. Matthew, and they have learnt hymns and texts, and they know to the end of the Catechism, and the Ten Commandments. Now the girls have no clothes. They can all sew, and come to school very happy every day. I hope that your honour for these children continues to pray, that the word of God in their hearts may be imprinted, and that they may have faith in Jesus Christ, and receive him as their '*Salvation Giver*.'"

BOTH SIDES OF THE PICTURE.

Notwithstanding that we rejoice in knowing many a Ragged School child now to be a respectable member of society, and leading a Christian life, while others have been gathered into the Good Shepherd's fold, yet we meet with sad disappointment too. Several reasons may be given why we have to lament over the falling away of our pupils. But the chief ones arise from their early training, or rather want of it, as their childhood has been spent in an atmosphere of all that is evil, and then the good instruction they get at school is likely to be obliterated by the bad example they get at home, and the companions they associate with when out of it. I remember a boy we thought well of, using some very improper language in the school-

mistress's hearing, and when she reproved him by saying, "Smith, this comes of you playing with bad boys," he replied, weeping bitterly, "Teacher, *I have nothing but bad boys to play with.*"

Many years since, when I first became acquainted with the school [Sermon Lane, Islington] I now work in, it was held in a loft above a blacksmith's shop. The children ascended by a sort of ladder. It was clean and comparatively well aired; but the noise of the forge, and the mode of ascent, made it rather an undesirable place for a school, and as it was not long opened till it was quite filled, we determined to try and get a building of our own; but to get several hundred pounds raised was not so easy. We thought of a bazaar; and although I would rather get the funds in any other way, yet it seems to be the only plan to get at some people's money. We worked hard and were eminently successful; so, with the profits of the sale, and some subscriptions, we soon got the money, and had a neat commodious building erected just opposite the loft, where we now carry on a large school in two capital school-rooms. It is situated in a densely-populated lane, where there are many courts opening into it; and, miserable though they are, they have most inviting names, such as Mount Zion, Prospect Place, and various Groves and Gardens. The inhabitants are chiefly drovers, and men who take care of omnibus and cab horses.

They are a rough set, earning but scanty wages, and caring very little whether their children learn to read or not.

Soon after the new school was opened, a family of three or four children applied for admission: they were clean, but very poor, and half-starved looking, yet nice-like children; and, on inquiry, we found they were suitable for our school. They lived close at hand in one of the courts bearing the name of Russell Place—Earl Russell being a great friend of Ragged Schools, they had honoured him by giving his name to the court. The father was a horse-cleaner, earning 18*s.* a-week, and had a wife and six children to support; so I leave you to judge how they were likely to be fed, or if they could afford to pay anything for education. Not long after their admission Mrs. L. sent for me in great distress, for, the night before, the father, in a fit of despondency, had tried to commit suicide, but fortunately had not succeeded, and was then in the hospital. We were all deeply grieved for the poor woman, and assisted her as well as we could; and by-and-by he recovered and resumed work, and they struggled on, the children attending school regularly for many years. As they grew up they got into employment—the girls first into *little places*, the name given to small tradesmen's service; but being well behaved they got in time into good situations. The boys went to various kinds of employment, and the father got to be carman to a wood merchant. His employer being at a distance, the family moved away from the neighbourhood, and but for an occasional visit from the girls we lost sight of the L's.

One evening, about eighteen months since, when the committee had met for business, we were told one of our old scholars had come to see us; so we desired George L. to be sent up, when there stood before us the once half-starved little boy, now a fine stout young man. The account he gave of himself was, that he had been errand-boy to a butcher, then a waiter at some dining-rooms, but that now he was very anxious to emigrate to New Zealand.

At that time, as I had some interest in getting emigrants sent out, I promised at once to do what I could to get him a passage. Soon I had the promise of getting him sent off in a few weeks, as an assistant steward in one of the emigrant vessels, as he knew something of the duties of a waiter. In the meantime I employed him in cleaning windows and other odd jobs about my house, so that he might earn a shilling or two, and get some food. He worked so well that a lady living opposite engaged him to come weekly to do the same. This continued for four or five weeks, and every day I hoped to get him sent off. One morning I was rather surprised by a visit from this lady's husband; and, to my great dismay, he told me L. had, the day before, gone off with his wife's valuable watch, chain, and appendages, and two very costly rings. I was truly grieved, though the lady and gentleman attached no blame to me, as they had employed L. without making any inquiries of me; although, had they done so, I would probably have given him a good character, as he had been accustomed to go into every room in the house, and nothing was ever missed.

Information was given to the police. His mother knew nothing of him, as he had left her some days before the robbery. A watch was kept upon the house, but he did not return; and although a handsome reward was offered for the recovery of the jewels, he was not heard of until one evening a short time after, when his mother came here in a state of distraction, to say he had come there that day, told her what he had done, and said he was so miserable he was going to give himself up to justice. He did so; and next morning the gentleman who had lost the property was summoned to attend the police-court. L. was at once recognised as an old offender, who had just come out of prison, after eighteen months' confinement, for robbing his master. After several examinations, as there was no one saw him take the jewels, the magistrate said he would not convict him on his own confession, as the jails are so very comfortable, and those in them so well fed, that they would constantly have people giving themselves up, and *saying* they had committed such and such offences, while others commit small thefts and do not try to escape, just to get warmth and shelter. So young L. was let loose again on society; and although the owner of the property offered a reward of £5 for its recovery through the police, it was never heard of.

One night last summer, a few months after this occurred, the house next mine was entered, and a considerable amount of property carried off. The thieves got in by the dining-room window, which they got at by bringing a ladder that some painters had left in the garden on the other side of my house. They took the ladder over our wall, and returned it to its place at another part of the garden, leaving their footmarks, and knocking down a part of the wall in both places. As my own house would have been quite as easily entered, and had only myself and servant in it, while there was a large family next door, I cannot help thinking L. was amongst the thieves, and protected my dwelling; for I have frequently spoken of even the worst as having a regard for those that have taken an interest in them, and I have gone into places both by night and by day when my only safety was that of being known to some one as a "Ragged School lady," as we are generally designated.

I must not close this without a more pleasing anecdote. It was only the

other day that I was walking along a rather quiet street in this neighbourhood, when a fine, honest-looking boy, of fourteen or fifteen, came up to me, carrying a basket, and began talking about a dog I was leading. I entered into conversation with him. He said, "I don't think you know me, ma'am." I did not at first; but when he told me his name, I quite recollected him, and asked about some of his family, particularly one of his sisters, whom I knew well formerly. I was really grieved to hear that, not many months before, while sitting beside her mother, she got up, and reaching across the fire-place to get a knife with which to divide an apple she wished to share with her sisters, her clothes caught fire, and although everything was done to extinguish it, she was so severely burned she had to be taken to Bartholomew's Hospital, where, after lingering nearly a week, she died. The boy told me she never wearied of singing and repeating hymns, even when she was what he called "lighted-headed." She died singing—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild."

I found the boy himself was then errand-boy at a very respectable shop, and that he went to church once every Sunday, and always attended the Sabbath-school. How pleasing it is to tell of this after the sad history of George L.! "The ways of the Lord are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace."—*Children's Hour.*

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK—WEST AND SOUTH.

From Mr. Hytche's *thirteenth* annual Report we make the following extracts, to indicate the nature of his work and the condition of the Ragged Schools west of Tottenham Court Road and south of the Thames.

In the west and south there are 83 institutions, namely, 77 schools, and 6 refuges.

Last year I paid the following

VISITS:—

Sunday Schools	71
Day Schools	376
Night Schools	209
Refuges	27
Special	81
Local Committees	8
Public Meetings	20
Parents' Meetings	16
	808

Some districts have been much changed by railways. Thus, in Westminster, above 500 adults, whose children were of the ragged type, have removed to other districts. Thus the school in New Street, Notting Hill,

has been sold to a railway, but its use is allowed to the committee for the present. Crescent Place is likely to be affected, as a railway now in the course of construction will probably require a part of the school-room. A great part of the district which supplied the Poplar Place School with scholars is pulled down, and the attendance has decreased one-third.

Two institutions were added to your list last year:—

1. Mansfield Street, Borough Road.—It is solely a Sunday Night School. It is attended by above 200 scholars, who are taught by 25 voluntary teachers. It is of great service to a large and depraved population who live in the courts on both sides of the Borough Road.

2. Henry Street, Kent Street.—This school is planted in a lane which branches out of Kent Street. It is conducted in a house where Dick Turpin lived. The present operations are, Sunday Afternoon School, attended by 70; Day School, attended by 95; a Clothing Club; and a Mothers' Meeting, just established.

Last year I reported 19 extensions, namely, 4 Sunday Schools, 1 Day School, 3 Night Schools, 2 Penny Banks, 2 Clothing Clubs, and 7 Parents' Meetings.

The number of distinct operations in the west and south are as follows:—

Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools	104
Day Schools	77
Night Schools	93
Boys' Industrial Classes	9
Girls' do. do.	52
Refuges	6
Penny Banks	47
Clothing Clubs	39
Parents' Meetings	42
Ragged Churches	47
Bands of Hope	5
	521

In the year 1864 there were 483 operations. It is, then, gratifying to find that, though some branches have ceased, yet that a balance of 38 remains in favour of present operations, as the result of two years' work.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

are connected with 72 institutions. In addition, ordinary Sunday Schools are conducted in six other buildings.

Of these Sunday Schools, 25 meet in the morning, and are attended by 1,215; the 56 which meet in the afternoon are attended by 4,887; and 48 meet in the evening, with an average attendance of 6,450.

The number of teachers registered is 1,279; but as the average attendance is only 790, nearly 500 are absent every Sunday. Of the teachers, 60 were formerly scholars, and show in many cases unusual ability in disciplining and interesting their classes.

The step which I took in 1865, followed up, as it was, by public and private questioning last year, had the desired effect of greatly increasing the Sunday-afternoon attendance of day scholars. Thus it appears that the Sunday-afternoon attendance increased from 3,182, in 1865, to 4,887 in 1866, showing an increase of 1,705 scholars.

The order of most Sunday Schools is satisfactory. But some—either from the paucity of teachers, or the recent influx of juvenile "roughs"—present the very same aspect as did our Ragged Schools when first opened. Take the following as specimens of what I saw last year:—*Walker Street, Borough.*—70 scholars and 5 teachers present. Nearly every lad noisy, if not worse. When the leaders were expelled, they drummed at the window shutters, and danced and shouted outside. At another visit I could not obtain admittance, as the teachers were afraid that the roughs outside would rush in. *Hinde's Mews, Marylebone.*—At the *Afternoon* School the boys were ungovernable. During the address, some kept exclaiming, "Yes, yes, yes," at the end of every sentence. *White Hart Court, Walworth Road.*—Before the school was opened, the boys kept singing the chorus of nigger melodies, or shouting across the room to their companions.

As a means of increasing the staff of teachers, Senior Bible Classes cannot be too highly recommended. Such classes are connected with 24 schools, and have 504 members. A similar class is attached to Lant Street School; but it is composed of females belonging to ordinary Sunday-afternoon Schools. From this class assistant teachers are selected whenever the staff is too small in the Sunday Night School.

44 Sunday Schools statedly conduct Prayer Meetings: they are attended by about 1,000 teachers, and many elder scholars. In every case it is pleasing to notice the quiet, devout behaviour of the scholars, mostly girls, who, usually at their own request, attend the Teachers' Prayer Meetings.

DAY SCHOOLS

are connected with 52 institutions. As some, however, conduct more than one kind of Day School in distinct rooms, they may be thus enumerated:—48 Mixed Schools, 12 for Boys, 10 for Girls, and 14 Infant Schools. This shows that there are 84 distinct Day Schools. The daily attendance is 7,500. The number on the books is 10,816.

The following particulars, gleaned from the well-kept register of Clarence Street, Rotherhithe, will show how constant is the change in the elements of our schools:—On books, 360; daily average, 273; last year, 226, or 126 boys and 100 girls, were admitted; 50 boys and 24 girls left for pay schools; 35 boys and 46 girls obtained situations; 21 boys and 33 girls left the parish.

As in former years, so during the thirteenth year of my engagement, I paid due attention to the class admitted. My diary shows that, in 14 schools, 81 scholars were privately questioned; of whom 27 were excluded. I have reason, too, to believe that the knowledge that doubtful cases are thus treated by your Agent, prevents many from applying for admission. In this course I find the bulk of the day teachers ready to assist. Thus, in July last, above 40, who belonged to a National School which was closed for holidays, were refused admission by the teachers of Robert Street. One

case may be specially referred to. As the attendance at Marylebone Court rose from 50 to 85 under a new teacher, my suspicions were excited. Hence, one day in June last, I examined every child. As a result, of 60 present, 13 were excluded by the committee on my advice, and 6 more stayed away through fear of this examination; 3 were children of postmen, 2 were the children of gentlemen's servants, and 3 of a tradesman. They had all attended pay schools. The whole of the 19 who were thus excluded have gone to National or private schools.

The time-table of many Day Schools is much interrupted by the late attendance of scholars. Some schools—George Street, Fitzroy Market, Noel Street, and Lower Park Road, for example—have endeavoured to remedy this evil by restricting the hour of admission. But as unhappily it is usually more the fault of the mothers than of their children, the latter become the real sufferers. This rule, then, however desirable, should, I think, be relaxed, at least in favour of those elder girls who are of some use at home, and who, if they attend at all, cannot attend at a set hour.

The teachers of Pear Street, Fitzroy Market, and Hog Lane keep "log-books." In these are recorded every day any striking fact which may have occurred. As an epitome, not so much of the day's work as of the day's events, they are most interesting, and, in fact, supply materials for a history of the school.

In 20 Day Schools, 130 paid monitors are employed. They receive regular training lessons daily. They have partial charge of 3,092 scholars. In 10 Day Schools, the infants are confided to their care. I have watched their labours with much pleasure, for the bulk, as respects cleanliness, diligence, and kindliness, are above all praise.

In accordance with your desire, the paid monitors, and every scholar who had attained six years, were individually examined last year. At this examination there were 6,655 scholars present. Of these, 2,926 were of six years and upwards. It appears that 192 showed good, and 365 fair, Biblical knowlege; 817 read well, and 519 moderately; 879 wrote well, and 634 moderately; 1,347 passed in addition, 572 in subtraction, 387 in division, and 569 in multiplication; 661 passed in the multiplication table; 943 passed in notation of three figures, and 553 in four figures.

NIGHT SCHOOLS

are conducted by 64 institutions. They include 39 Boys' Schools, 29 Girls' Schools, and 16 Mixed Schools, making 84 distinct Night Schools. The number on the books is 5,326. The average attendance is 3,540.

There was a great influx of juvenile "roughs" into our Night Schools last winter, and very many more might have been admitted had there been more teachers. The following facts, extracted from my diary, will indicate the class that attended in large numbers last winter:—*Kensal Green.*—Before the doors were opened the lads who were waiting for admission broke down the palings of the next cottage. Nearly all were shouting and swearing and dancing outside like wild Indians. *Moreton Street.*—The master was compelled to dismiss the school, as one lad got inside the cistern, and the rest

danced in defiance. As they broke the windows, a policeman was called in to lock up the ringleader. *Gravel Lane.*—Seven lads were excluded, as they persisted in smoking. *New Street.*—The lads were throwing down the forms and pitching the books into the fire. They varied this amusement by dancing and singing, "We'll hang the master on a sour apple-tree." *Amicable Row.*—Teaching was almost impossible. Shouts of laughter greeted every remonstrance. When these lads did not shout they danced. *Horseferry Road.*—Found the school-door locked: when the door was opened some lads rushed in, and were with difficulty re-expelled. *Hatcham.*—The teachers were much annoyed by the hawk-boys and costermongers present. Crackers were furtively let off; at each report the rest of the lads gave a loud cheer. Again, as showing the tastes of many of our Night scholars, it may be stated that the opening of a new "gaff" thinned considerably the schools in the neighbourhood. Thus, too, during the Epsom Races the attendance of the boys at White Hart Court fell from 30 to 5.

What is needed to check these evils is some earnest volunteers, who are not afraid of work. But, unhappily, only one-third of the Night Schools in my district are thus aided. In most cases, where such service is rendered, the effect is beneficial.

By way of making the schools more attractive, and thus of competing with the "gaffs" of the New Cut, the master of Broadwall School, by my advice, devotes half an hour on the last school night in every week to choral singing. This has not only aided in disciplining the school, but from its attractiveness it has swelled the attendance throughout the week. Thus, too, the masters of Moreton Street and Nelson Street devote the last half hour of Friday evening to reading some interesting book aloud. As they are both good readers, the scholars receive a practical illustration in the art of reading. In addition, as attendance at such weekly readings is regarded as a privilege, many ungovernable lads have been civilized thereby.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

In my district there are 9 Boys' Industrial Classes, with 120 members. Shoemaking and tailoring are the branches usually taught. The boys at New Tothill Street and Crescent Place are taught knitting. In addition, there are 3 Shoe-black Societies. They employ 167 boys, who last year earned about £2,300.

Needlework and knitting, and, in a few cases, cooking and school-cleaning, are taught in 52 Girls' Schools. They are attended by 1,554 girls. They mostly belong to Day Schools, but Doughty Street devotes two evenings per week to needlework; and Webber Row, White Hart Court, and Surrey Row have large classes, which are taught solely by lady volunteers.

REFUGES.

There are 6 refuges in my district. The 3 for boys, which can accommodate 80, are at present filled. The 3 for girls, with room for 113, have 110 inmates.

SANITARY.

The sanitary state of most schools constantly came under my scrutiny last year; in fact, in no respect has my visitation been found more beneficial than in observing and suggesting plans for the mitigation of glaring evils. Some sanitary defects are, however, beyond the power of the local officials to remedy. In fact, I have frequently been compelled to advise the teachers to close some of the windows to keep out the stenches from factories outside. That this was imperative the following facts will testify:—*Horseferry Road.*—The smell of rotting grains from the adjoining brewery rendered the school most offensive. *Crescent Place* and *Gray's Yard.*—The accumulated heaps of dung outside almost caused vomiting. *Marylebone Court.*—The room was rendered unwholesome through the stale fish or decaying entrails in the cellar below. *Lant Street* and *Princes Street.*—Indescribable stenches pervaded these rooms, as a strong wind sent in the effluvia from soap and candle or bone factories. *Amicable Row* and *Walker Street.*—Rotten vegetables, mingled with ass-ordure, lying in heaps around these schools, render them unbearable. In all these cases I advised that the windows should be closed on the windward side. This mitigated these evils, but the cause still remains to breed fever and cholera during the coming summer.

An unusual number of children died either from cholera or putrid fever, especially in Bermondsey; and more, there can be no doubt, would have died had it not been for the cholera medicine which you supplied last autumn. Not only were the local officials grateful for this remedy, but your consideration has favourably affected many poor parents, who, though they are impenetrable to spiritual motives, have comprehended and appreciated your care for their bodily needs.

I gladly report that a few schools have partially fed the poorer children. Thus last winter George Yard gave rice, milk, and bread twice weekly; Grotto Passage gave a slice of bread daily; Hog Lane and Exeter Buildings gave soup; and Tothill Street and Pear Street gave Irish stew to their scholars. In most cases the cost was defrayed by a separate fund.

The following schools were enlarged last year:—Druid Street, Exeter Buildings, and Hog Lane. Broadwall was removed to more suitable premises; and Robert Street adapted a "gaff" for the adult Bible Classes and Mission Services.

BANKS AND CLOTHING CLUBS.

In my district there are 47 Penny or Farthing Banks, and 39 Clothing Clubs. There are now only nine institutions without one of these operations. Of these banks, 25 are confined to scholars, including three prosperous Farthing Banks. The three most important banks are in Harrow Street, Jurston Street, and Robert Street. Being, in fact, the Savings' Banks of their localities, they exercise a beneficial influence on the costermongers and fish-hawkers who abound there.

PARENTS' MEETINGS.

In my district there are 42 Mothers' Meetings, with upwards of 1,100 members. There are also four Fathers' Meetings, with about 200 members.

Nine Mothers' Meetings are conducted by Bible-women, some of whom have shown an increasing interest in Ragged Schools.

Divine worship is conducted in 47 buildings. The average attendance is 1,550, four-fifths being females.

SUMMARY.

As a conclusion to this Report, I would give a summary of my labours during the past year.

1. I addressed the scholars of every Day School on their attendance at Sunday School, and spoke to many privately on this subject. This has led to an increased attendance throughout my district. The paid teachers, by my advice, test the Sunday attendance every Monday.

2. Examined individually 2,926 scholars in 53 Day Schools, and tabulated the results.

3. Investigated 81 doubtful cases in 14 schools, and caused 27 children above the class to be excluded. Every child in Marylebone Court was thus tested.

3. Conferred with the committees or officers of 32 institutions, and suggested various improvements or new agencies.

4. By my interposition, a Sunday Night School was re-opened in Magdalen Street; Bell Street Sunday School was re-organized; Clarence Street became a Ragged Sunday School; and Mansfield Street became a thorough Ragged Sunday School.

6. Interfered to get various sanitary evils remedied in 24 schools. Through my suggestion, water-closets were cleansed, new ventilators were fixed, disinfectants were applied, and various external nuisances were brought under the notice of the Sanitary Inspector.

7. Aided various Night Schools to discipline the roughs. Amongst the Night Schools which most benefited by my advice may be mentioned Moreton Street, Hatcham, Amicable Row, Walker Street, Gravel Lane, and Broadwall.

8. Out of the 77 schools, 23, or one-third, engaged new teachers last year. As many of these were new to Ragged School work, they required both advice and sympathy. This was always given, and, I have every reason to believe, gratefully received.

9. Addressed, collectively or individually, many Day School girls, especially in Westminster, on wearing ornaments. This caused many to leave off their beads, although, I am sorry to say, many mothers persisted in giving their daughters necklaces or rings. I also addressed the children of the Marylebone Schools on attending "raffles," a practice, or rather vice, which prevails in that district. The children of Amicable Row Day School were also addressed on stealing, as two sisters had been guilty of theft.

The Teachers' Column.

UNSUCCESSFUL TEACHERS.

The importance of this subject every one must readily admit. It is a fact in medical science that before any permanent cure can be effected, the source and cause of the disease must be discovered. And the same thing holds true in other matters. We purpose, therefore, briefly to consider the *cause* of our non-success, wherever it exists, and then endeavour to prescribe a *remedy*.

We believe the great cause is the fact that we do not fully realize the dignity and responsibility of the work, and are consequently not sufficiently in earnest about it.

It has become fashionable to have a class in the Sunday School; and as fashion sways the world in more things than articles of dress, we find, as a consequence, that many have become teachers who have little love for the work, and whose hearts are comparatively cold and indifferent to its results. How otherwise can we explain the fact that so many are so frequently absent from their classes, "at the call"—as an American writer has expressed it—"of every flash preacher who may happen to be in the neighbourhood," and seem to make the school a matter of convenience, a place of resort when they have nothing else to do? It is this which tells so damagingly upon our success. Is it not this lukewarm, half-hearted service which prevents our attaining far greater results than have ever hitherto been accomplished by Sunday School instruction?

The question now comes, How can we remove this obstacle to our success? We believe it is to be overcome mainly by becoming more and more impressed with the solemn responsibility of the work we have undertaken. What are we seeking to do? What are we aiming at? Whatever it may be, we hold that if it comes short of seeking with all our strength the salvation of our scholars, we are missing the great end of our work.

We saw a picture lately which may illustrate what we may mean. A little child standing in the foreground had left the cottage, seen in the distance, and run to the edge of a deep precipice, and there, upon the very verge of death, it stood, all unconscious of its danger, and happy in its new-found liberty. Its mother, meantime, had missed it from the door, and having discovered whither it had strayed, was now running with all her speed to snatch it from its peril; and as you gazed upon the anxious, fear-stricken face, you could almost fancy you heard the agonizing cry bursting from her lips, "Oh, save my child!"

Our scholars have strayed from home, and they are exposed to danger upon every hand. The snares of the evil one are skilfully laid, and his decoys are busily at work; and if we would outstrip them, and rescue these young ones from their temptations, we must be up and doing, losing no time, and missing no opportunity. As nothing but complete restoration to her arms and heart would satisfy that mother, so we say that nothing short of winning over our scholars to the side of Jesus, and leading them back to his loving fold, should satisfy the teacher who desires to be accounted faithful.

We believe that Sabbath's work is lost in which every scholar is not pointed to the cross of Jesus as the only means of safety, and affectionately invited to find peace there. A famous preacher, who was noted for his earnest appeals and clear exposition of saving truth, is said to have reasoned thus: "There may be some among my auditors to-day who have never heard the Gospel before, and there may be others who will never hear it again; it is, therefore, my duty to pre-

sent the Gospel to them so fully, that, by the aid of the Spirit's grace, they may be saved by this one sermon."

If all our teachers took this sentiment as their motto, a new era would be ushered in for Sunday Schools, and there would be no more need to mourn over the want of success. And why should it not be so? We have the same truth to deliver, the same glorious message to bring; the necessity of our case is as urgent as the other; the youthfulness of our audience gives no certainty of longer or more frequent opportunities. Oh, then, be earnest in the work of teaching; and, like Richard Baxter, anxious to save the souls of all who hear him—

> "Speak as if you ne'er should speak again,
> A dying man to dying men."

But, it may be said, even supposing we had this earnestness and this devoted zeal, something more is needed to make us successful teachers. Very true. We must be able to present the truth in its most attractive garb, so as to captivate our scholars. To do this a ceaseless course of study is necessary. The teacher must be ever a learner in the school of experience. He must be either trained, or train himself for the work. The sculptor, who is able with his chisel to carve out of the rough block of stone or marble a human figure complete in every part, and perfect in its symmetry, did not acquire his marvellous ability in a day. It was only after long years of patient, laborious study, deep research, and careful examination of the best models he could find, that he was able to produce such a finished work of art.

The teacher's work is very much the same. His scholars come to him in a rude state of nature. His work is to mould their character, and shape their eternal destiny; and he can only do it aright after patient and prayerful study, continuous research, and imitation of the great masters in the art.—*R. C., Sunday Teachers' Treasury.*

SECRET OF SUCCESSFUL TEACHING.

An old divine has said, that "he who would set others in a flame must himself be burning." This is the real and true foundation of all successful teaching. When we read the few sermons left by the great evangelist Whitefield, so meagre are they in thought, and there is so little brilliancy in language, that we can scarcely comprehend how they not only moved the masses, but even the critical Lord Chesterfield. But, his soul being on fire with love to Jesus, a flame of love to Christ was kindled in his hearers. So must Ragged School teachers be: for it is earnestness, not mere knowledge or mental power, that is needed to make teaching and success a synonym. In other words—

> Thou must thyself be true,
> If thou the truth wouldst teach:
> Thy soul must overflow, if thou
> Another's soul wouldst reach;
> It needs the overflow of heart
> To give the lips full speech.
>
> Think truly, and thy thoughts
> Shall the world's famine feed;
> Speak truly, and each word of thine
> Shall be a fruitful seed;
> Live truly, and thy life shall be
> A great and noble creed!

The Editor's Note-book.

WHAT DO YOU LIVE FOR?

Dr. Chalmers said that thousands of men breathe, move, and live—pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? None were blessed by them; none could point to them as the means

of their redemption; not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled, and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday.

Will you thus live and die? O, man immortal, live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name by kindness, love, and mercy, on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten. No, your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of the evening. Good deeds will shine as brightly on the earth as the stars of heaven.

RAMS' HORNS.

SAMUEL MATHER said (1705) of the priests' trumpets that "some were of silver, and some of horn, Numb. x. 1, and 1 Chron. xv. 28. The *cornet*, that is an instrument of horn: so that Psa. xcviii. 6, '*with trumpet and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord the King.*' And rams' horns beat down the walls of Jericho, Josh. vi. If God institute the rams' horns, they shall be as powerful as the silver trumpets; to teach us that the meanest gifts of any godly minister [or teacher], if sincere, are accepted, and may be blessed of God for the good of souls, for the casting down of strongholds, and for success and victory against our spiritual enemies. Rams' horns may do it as well as silver trumpets."

Christian reader, true successor of the Hebrew priesthood as thou art, how dost thou use the ram's horn God has graciously put into thy hands? Dost thou use it to call men to become loyal to Jesus, and thus to fight the great battle of life? Or is it hid in a corner, so begrimed with dust that it is forgotten? Or, if possible, still worse, does the "trumpet give an uncertain sound?"

Answer these questions on thy knees, and thou shalt do well; for whether God bestows a silver trumpet or a mere ram's horn, thou wilt be held responsible for its use.

THE TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

"WE *thank* Thee that Thou hast made our post a responsible one." Such were the words used in prayer by an earnest Sunday-school teacher. They made a deep impression on my mind, and started a train of earnest thought. Many times had I heard that the post was a responsible one, many times heard prayer offered that we might be made deeply to feel this truth; but this was a new idea. I began to inquire within myself, "How many of us feel thus strongly the *privilege* of teaching? the *privilege* of thus working for God, and bringing glory unto his name by leading souls unto him?"

Many teachers labour humbly and prayerfully, earnestly desiring that through their instrumentality some of these little ones may be led to Jesus. But do we work joyfully, thankfully, sincerely, *glad* to do anything we can for our dear Lord? Alas! I fear there are but few who feel thus. We go before our classes sad, and burdened with a sense of our responsibility, instead of accepting it thankfully, rejoicing that he allows us to work for him.

Let us try to think of this subject more practically. When an earthly friend asks of us a favour, do we not experience a real pleasure in accomplishing his desire? And when we have performed our labour of love, we present it without doubt that it will be acceptable and received in kindness, all imperfections overlooked. Is not Jesus a more tender and loving Friend than any we have on earth? Will he not appreciate all our efforts, and lovingly smile upon us when we attempt to fulfil his wishes? Let us, then, labour diligently and faithfully, thankfully rejoicing in the goodness which allows us, imperfect as we are, to do anything in this great and blessed work.

Our Library Table.

Coincidences. By BURNETT TABREEN. London: Thomas & Co.

We regard it as something more than a "coincidence"—even a direct interposition of Providence—that when not only the verbal inspiration of the Bible is doubted by some pseudo-Christians, but even the facts of the Old Testament are denied by our Colensos and 'Stanleys, such marvellous attesting facts to the truth of Bible narrative have been dug up out of the ruins of Nineveh by Layard and others. It has been said that such sceptics "have the *arguments*, but we have the *texts*;" and doubtless to the true believer, who knows that when he opens the Bible he reads not merely the words of man but those of the Holy Spirit, the statements of Scripture are unhesitatingly received. But still we are thankful to know that in the rubbish of the buried cities of the East there are proofs which are being continually recalled to life proving that Bible narratives is plain fact and not mere poetic imagining. Nor do we doubt that, when the report of the antiquarians, who are now engaged in examining the mounds and ruins which are spread over the Holy Land, is presented, that as striking confirmatory facts will be supplied to show that the prophets were no writers of myths. Thus happily in an age when novel objections to the Bible have been imported from Germany by Bunsen, God has caused even the dead stones to attest the truth of his word. It thus seems that God is not without a witness to his truth even in these last days.

These thoughts were suggested to us as we read the lecture of our friend Mr. Tabrum, the earnest Secretary of Limehouse Ragged School. It is a lucid summary, in terse Saxon diction, such as suited a Ragged School auditory, of the way in which the "old stones" of Nineveh and Sinai confirm the "old book." We think that it is well calculated to remove the doubts of some who have been misled by infidel cavils, whilst to all who encounter earnest doubters—not self-sufficient critics—it will supply arguments as irrefragable as they are striking.

The Children's Hour. London: Groombridge & Sons.

This is a capital serial for children of a higher class than those who attend Ragged Schools. We are glad to find that it strives to enlist the sympathy of rich children in behalf of their poor little brothers and sisters. We abridge (p. 104) a sketch of Ragged School experiences by a lady who has been an earnest fellow-worker from the very outset of the movement.

Correspondence.

FEMALE CONVICTS' HOME.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—There is a class of women now requiring peculiar and energetic service from those who desire to prepare the way of the Lord. In efforts to

gather out quickly his ransomed people from the pre sent evil world, we mus not forget to seek for some among the convict women. This is difficult work and disagreeable work. The convict woman is not a pleasant object. Her conduct in prison and out of prison is a by-word; her wickedness very great. Those who come in contact with such women see the hideousness and deformity of depraved human nature in a form which the moral and virtuous can scarcely understand. No expression in the Bible descriptive of bad people overstates the condition of these criminals. Hurriedly repeating their crimes, they return frequently to prison; and the number of infant lives sacrificed to their brutality is something almost incredible. The state of these women is plainly told in the final verses of the 1st chapter of Romans. Some think that this Scripture is prophetic. It is, alas, the history of convict lives to-day! "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

From such offenders as these we should turn away hopelessly if there were not warrant for attacking even this stronghold of the devil. To one of such criminal women Jesus gave "the water of life" at Sychar's well. To another he "forgave much;" and with gentle voice he bade a third to "go and sin no more." Should we not do likewise? But when? and how? These are questions of which we have thought for a long time. Visiting in prisons, and speaking directly to the female prisoners about their state, is one way in which members of their own sex can try to do them good. But this can only be done under much restriction. The next mode of influencing them that suggests itself is that of offering them Homes on their release from prison, in which they may be brought under the various agencies at work for the conversion of souls.

One such Home is now in operation at Notting Hill. It has been opened in faith, and has already had to record the signal favour of the Spirit's quickening one inmate. The extension of the mission is necessary, and the establishment of other similar houses is needed. Besides the work in the Home referred to, a Bible-woman is on special duty seeking out these "lost sheep." When this effort was announced in the *Revival*, a response was received in a very cheering form. Postage-stamps came to us from "One Found," and two similar enclosures from very humble hands, probably of the same order. A letter was received from a convict-convert, conveying good wishes for the success of the Home. She had heard of the reception of the first inmate, and writes:—"May the poor sinners you have received be received by Jesus as I have been." Her words recall an act of the Lord's, of which we desire to remind our friends: "He receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Our funds are at present wholly inadequate to the work in hand. The women must be provided with a means of earning their living; and this cannot be done without expense. A laundry is being fitted up, the conveniences of which require a considerable outlay. Women who are unable to do washing are also appealing for help, and form a second class, for which it is necessary to make another arrangement. Ladies who sympathize in this

undertaking may greatly aid by finding employment for the women when they prove themselves to be capable and worthy.

The special case of these sinners is earnestly commended to your consideration, and a response in the spirit of Him who "died for the ungodly" is awaited in confidence by, yours faithfully,

SUSAN MEREDITH.

16, *Kensington Park Terrace North, W.*

Notices of Meetings.

COTTAGE PLACE.

ON the 19th of March last a public meeting in behalf of this school was held in the Lambeth Baths. In the absence of T. Hughes, Esq., M.P., Mr. Cox presided.

By the Report it appeared that this school was established twenty years ago in Waterloo Road. The Day and Night Schools are attended by about 180 children. There is also a Mothers' Meeting, a Penny Bank, and a Band of Hope. In addition there are well-conducted Sunday Morning and Afternoon Schools, and also a Children's Service on Sunday evenings. These Sunday Schools are conducted by a distinct Committee, but the bulk of the day scholars attend. Though the expenses have been reduced to the very lowest scale, the schools are in debt about £60.

There is not only want of money, but Christian friends are needed for the Committee, and also ladies to manage the Mothers' Meeting. These schools have been almost entirely in the hands of the Treasurer for the last ten years, who has been out of town the whole of that time. He would gladly resign his charge into other hands, if any one in the neighbourhood would take the responsibility, when he would willingly cancel his debt.

The Revs. J. Amos, J. M. Brown, G. D. Evans, and Messrs. R. S. Dixon, Lewis, and G. M. Murphy, took part in the proceedings.

WENTWORTH STREET.

THE annual public meeting in connection with these schools was recently held in All Saints' School-room, Stonebridge Common. Alderman Sir R. W. Carden presided.

The Report was of the most encouraging character, every branch manifesting a marked improvement, with the exception of the funds, which showed a small deficit. The inhabitants of Dalston were especially thanked for their efforts on behalf of these schools.

Sir ROBERT CARDEN then rose and said:—"I remember the great commotion which was created last year on account of the flight of the Jewish children from the schools, but I am pleased to see they have nearly all returned. What surprised me in the last Report was that there was a balance in favour of the Treasurer. I am Treasurer of several institutions of this character, and never yet have had a balance in my hands. The present Report is very gratifying; although rather heart-rending in the beginning, it is encouraging in the end. I was extremely pleased to find that feeding the poor children formed a part of your system. I am also pleased that nothing more than reading, writing, and arithmetic is taught in these schools. If you give a child in their condition of life this amount of education, it is all they require. I think the public generally do

not appreciate the advantage of Ragged Schools. Not less than 10,000 children have received prizes from the Ragged School Union for keeping a situation for a whole year. And if they have done it one year, it is a token of their welfare in after-life. There are not half enough Ragged Schools in London, notwithstanding that there are fully 30,000 children in them at the present time. Whilst there is no work more needed, happily there is none which has more rewarded patient labour than Ragged Schools.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. M. Myers, C. Dukes, J. Heathfield, and J. Miall, and Messrs. Gent and Holms.

MAIDA HILL.

THE annual meeting of this institution was held on the 4th of April. The Earl of Shaftesbury had promised to preside, but was prevented doing so.

The annual report congratulated the subscribers on the twenty-first anniversary being attained, it having been founded in 1846 by their dear departed friend Mr. Bromley, to whose energetic labours, exercised in humble faith and prayer, its success was very greatly to be attributed. The various operations had been carried on with much satisfaction to the Committee, and, it was hoped, with much blessing to those who came under the influence of the institution during the past year, and many friends had come forward to fill the gaps caused by the removal of old teachers and supporters. There had been fifty-nine boys in the Refuge and Industrial School, twenty-three of whom had obtained situations. The earnings of the boys from paper-bag making and printing showed a profit for the year of £197, which went towards their support and maintenance. 662 boys have passed through this department of the institution since its foundation.

Mr. Gent gave a sketch of the origin and progress of education in this country, showing how the Ragged School system had been established to meet the necessities of the poorest and most destitute of the population, which the various efforts of previous labourers in the cause had failed to reach. There are now 30,000 children in London brought under the influence of religious and secular training by Ragged Schools, who would otherwise be without any other education but the evil training of the streets and miserable homes. The Rev. C. Campe spoke of the influence of love upon the poor wretched children who so much needed and so seldom experienced the feeling that any one cared for them. He referred to one of the poor boys, who had lately been an inmate of the Refuge, who had been convicted twenty times, but who, being brought by Mr. Amor from a police-court to the Refuge, had been won over by kind treatment, and is now earning an honest livelihood. These can be seen by any visitor to the Refuge in Hatton Street, Edgware Road. Mr. Amor gave a number of most interesting details relating to boys whom he had received, and of their subsequent progress and present positions in life, which afforded many pleasing incidents and much encouragement, not only to continue, but, if possible, to extend, the benefits of the institution to a greater number.

Photographs of many old scholars from all parts of the world were on the table for the inspection of the visitors.

Papers, Original and Selected.

LAST YEAR'S PROGRESS.

GROWTH is ever the sign of life. Circle by circle, year after year, a goodly tree increases in its girth, until the time arrives when the sap is powerless to reach the uppermost branches, and the tree gradually dies. The same law governs the moral and spiritual world. To stand still is a sheer impossibility, for all healthy Christians grow inwardly year by year; and the outward development tells of the growth within. Hence to stand still is but a synonym for retrogression, if not of spiritual death.

Happily, the principle that life is indicated by yearly, nay hourly growth, applies to the Ragged School movement. Thus in reviewing its history we find that the labourers have neither retrograded nor, in sinful self-complacency, have they rested content with past achievements. Some of the romance which invested this home mission when Christian men and women, Bibles in hand, invaded the wretched dens of London, may have vanished before stern realities; but the moral heroism which marked so many of the first teachers is happily not yet extinct, and hundreds still show a courage in evangelizing the fever-dens of London which is beyond all praise. Nor do we fear that Ragged School teachers will slacken in their many labours for Christ, so long, at least, as men *really* believe that there is a soul to be lost or won, and that in the vilest and most lawless are involved imperishable destinies. With the Divine warrant, "Let him that heareth say come," they preach to thief and harlot, if haply they may save some.

To those who have watched or aided Ragged Schools from the outset of the movement, no feature has been more pleasing than this—namely, how every step in advance has led to, if it has not suggested, other onward movements. Thus the work of to-day has developed the work of to-morrow. If, then, the whole field is not yet occupied—and the fact that seven new Institutions were established last year would indicate that there is "much land yet to be possessed"—still, so far as *machinery* is concerned, the field may be regarded as fully occupied. Taking, then, the past as a prophecy of the future, we doubt not that the work of Ragged

Schools will grow year by year, until there is no byeway of this great Babel left without its Pharos to light souls steeped in poverty or infamy to the City of God.

In indicating last year's growth of Ragged Schools, we may consider the increase in two ways—namely, the new population reached, and the new agency employed.

First. Take the population added to the London Ragged Schools last year. Thus we learn that there are now 29,511 Sunday Scholars, being an increase in 1866 of 3,618, or the population of a fair-sized town. So in our Day and Night Schools, with 35,453 on the books, there is now a daily attendance of 28,540. This shows an increase of 1,640 scholars, who are trained not only for this world but for the next. Begun as a work for Christ, our movement has also become a remarkable work for society.

Nor is this the only increase in the population reached; for happily, for many years strenuous efforts have been made by Ragged Schools, both at home and abroad, to socialize and christianize adults as well as children. For it was seen that agency found so suitable for children, might, with modifications, be equally adapted to their parents. Especially have persevering efforts been made to gather in from dens and hovels the mothers of our scholars, that they might learn how to "show piety at home." And surely, if the dictum of the great Napoleon be true, that "what is wanted for the regeneration of society is *mothers*," we think that no later offshoot of the Ragged School system is of greater importance than our Mothers' Meeting. We are glad, then, to learn that there is no retrogression in such meetings. Thus in 1866 there were 2,425 gathered into our parents' meetings; there are now 2,525 members.

A kindred effort is the Ragged Church, which was devised for those who are either too ragged and dirty or too vile for ordinary places of worship. In 1866 there were 4,944 attendants at Ragged Churches or those Mission services which are intended for the same class. But now the aggregate congregation is no less than 5,838, or 64 per Ragged Church. The bulk of these it is certain would never attend the "great congregation" did such services cease in Ragged Schools; and thus they would never hear the great truth that God, being no respecter of persons, in fatherly love cares for the outcast as much as for those to whom society accords its honours and its rewards.

Second. Nor has last year's machinery diminished, but almost every week saw some operation commenced for the social or spiritual reclamation of the pariahs of society. Not only in new but in old Ragged Schools were there valuable additions to the agencies employed. Thus, in 1866 there were 1,113 distinct operations; there are now 1,168. This shows an increase as the result of our year's labour of no less than 56 operations. These included no less than 40 Sunday, Day, and Night Schools.

By combining the population and the operations it will be seen that 41,291 persons, old and young, are embraced by the 1,168 operations of London Ragged Schools. These are superintended by 3,241 teachers, who work solely for Christ and not for pecuniary reward, knowing that the greatest honour a saved one can receive is to be anointed as an evangelist, and thus to help Jesus to fill heaven.

Have we not, then, on reviewing the last year's growth of our movement, to thank that God who has caused the dew of His Spirit to rest on our labours? To no lower source would we go as the Author of both agents and agency, for God alone gave our work-field, and anointed the fitting labourers. We may then in faith leave the future in His hands, believing that He who added 324 to our working staff last year will anoint other labourers, fully equipped for this true home missionary work. Then will the fields, now ripe for the sickle, be reaped, and a rich spiritual harvest be gathered into the great garner of God. For happily the promise is not yet cancelled: "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

TAXATION OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

CONFERENCES on this important subject have been held at Birmingham, Manchester, and in London, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury; the latter was attended by the leading ministers of all denominations. But notwithstanding the irrefragable proofs presented that in many cases the enforcement of parish rates in the case of schools and charities will be a synonym for their ultimate extinction, the Poor Law Board, whom the question chiefly concerns, have hitherto been appealed to in vain; for in reply to every deputation or remonstrance there has only been the stereotyped, red-tape reply, "We will consider the question"!

Now, we should have thought that the *wrong* was too patent to require any discussion. Schools never were taxed for parish purposes; and the very Act

under which the judicial decision was made, it is acknowledged, was never intended to apply to schools. Parishes, then, are bound in all honour not to avail themselves of a flaw in a statute, which was only detected, after 300 years, by legal acumen. We think, then, that the Poor Law Board are bound at once to introduce an explanatory Act, to relieve Ragged Schools and similar charities from poor-rates and other parish taxes.

Having failed in obtaining redress from Government, we think that it is time that the Legislature should interfere and settle this question equitably. On them will fall the blame if they do not at once stop this attempt to *tax voluntary labour*. If this is not done, we fear that, before long, some of the best worked, but less supported, Ragged Schools will speedily be erased from our list. At present they train thousands of destitute juveniles in habits of industry, who otherwise would be in the streets, growing up in idleness, if not in positive crime. The small reduction, then, in parish rates consequent on the taxing of Ragged Schools would be found in the end only to increase those rates tenfold; for what is now saved to society by Ragged Schools, by preventing idleness and crime, would have to be spent in punishment, and thus the parishes would ultimately confirm the proverb, "Penny wise, pound foolish."

We do not think it needful further to enforce the principle of the non-taxation of voluntary labourers, especially those engaged in Ragged Schools, especially as the arguments are well enforced in the following remarks of the *City Press*. It says that "It is essential to the well-doing of schools and charities that they should be wholly exempted from taxation. It is impossible that they should obtain the funds needful for their operations, and carry into effect their proposals for teaching the poor, or alleviating human misery, if they are made to contribute to any department of Imperial or local government. The charitably-disposed do not contemplate increasing their subscriptions to poor-rates, or to rates or taxes of any kind, in every effort they make to do good; and an absolute immunity from taxation is essential to the well-doing of the treasury of every charity, whether school, refuge, hospital, or what else. But the recent decision of courts of law on the Act of 43rd Elizabeth, cap. 2, threatens to undermine our charities by rendering them amenable to assessment and making large abstractions from their funds for the payment of poor and local rates. Every charitable institution is now liable to be mulcted of a large proportion of its revenue in aid of poor relief, the drainage of towns, the repairing of highways, and the building of magnificent vestry-halls. It is hard to believe that this is the fact, yet impossible to deny that it is so. If it be sound law to abstract from the funds of a charity which exists solely for the benefit of the poor, in order to relieve the legitimate ratepayer of some portion of his proper burden, there remains but one course for the charitable and the just to pursue, and that is to obtain an enactment exempting entirely, and for ever, all charitable institutions from their present liability to be rated."

Since the above was written, an influential deputation, headed by the Earl of Shaftesbury, met Lord Derby, who signified that, at the earliest time, the question should be brought under the notice of his colleagues; and if they found that, consistently with their duty, they could afford the charitable institutions of the country the desired relief, nothing would give him greater satisfaction.

ABSTRACT OF THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

THE Committee present their Report with heartfelt thanks to the Giver of every good gift for the progress, to this day, made by the Ragged School movement. They desire humbly to acknowledge the good hand of their God in this great work, well knowing that it is from him that all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; and by whose blessing alone upon the efforts of his servants has the sought-for good been realised.

At the last Annual Meeting a Resolution was adopted to extend the benefits of the Parent Society to Schools within an extended circle around the metropolis, the radius of which would be twenty-four miles from Charing Cross. And during the past year communications have been opened up with Schools in Brentford, Windsor, Kingston, Croydon, Dartford, Gravesend, St. Albans, Uxbridge, and other towns around London. The additional expense to the Society has been very small; but in the opinion of the country friends the benefits to their Schools have been valuable.

During the past year the demolition of houses has been going on at a fearful rate, and the poor have suffered considerably. They have been driven away and compelled to herd together in other localities, where large families have had to find all their accommodation in a single room, and that often a very small one. In poor neighbourhoods more than 1,500 houses have been taken down; and some of the Ragged School buildings in these localities have disappeared and the scholars been scattered.

New Schools have been opened in Mansfield Street, Southwark; Henry Street, Kent Street; New Inn Yard, Shoreditch; Rochester Row, Kentish Town; York Place, Strand; Chequer Alley, St. Luke's; Hornsey Road, Holloway. These buildings furnish accommodation for 1,500 scholars.

The numbers of Schools and Scholars now upon the Society's list is: 29,511 in 263 Sunday Schools; 19,326 in 200 Day Schools; 9,314 in 212 Evening Schools. The increase upon last year's numbers has been 3,618 Sunday Scholars, 640 Day Scholars, and 1,000 Night Scholars.

If the work were thus taken up generally and systematically the demand for voluntary teachers would probably be fairly met. It is gratifying to record that this cry has been in a degree responded to by an increase of 212 voluntary teachers during the past year. The number of these volunteers is 3,241.

Senior Bible Classes are conducted in 66 of the Schools, and are attended by 1,300 of both sexes.

The number of paid teachers has increased. At the close of last year the number was 429, which is an increase of 36 upon the year preceding. There has been an increase also in energy and devotion to their work that has been very gratifying. This was manifested in the past year by many of these persons making their schoolrooms serve as soup-kitchens, themselves and their elder scholars being the cooks.

The number of paid monitors has also been increased from 480 to 508 during the year.

The Committee give a capitation grant of £3 per year towards the support of boys and girls taken into the REFUGES direct from Ragged Schools. The total number of inmates in the twelve Refuges is about 500.

Clothing Clubs are conducted in 91 Schools, and towards the cost of which the persons benefited have themselves contributed £1,984.

The Industrial and Sewing Classes have been, as usual, busy in the department of mending and adapting left-off clothing to take the place of rags. Girls going into places have been specially helped by gifts of suitable garments, that they may put on a garb of respectability on entering service and before they had the opportunity to earn wages with which to buy what they needed.

By means of a special donation given by a lady, outfits have been supplied to boys entering places. This fund is available for boys of good conduct in the Schools, ready for situations, but needing clothing to obtain them.

The number of scholars going into situations annually from the Schools is large. The full number is not accurately known, but 51 of the Schools make a return of 1,567 boys and girls.

Scholars' Prizes have now for the fourteenth year been awarded under the conditions advertised. The number of claimants for the prizes was 595 (of whom 535 complied with all the conditions—viz., 255 boys and 280 girls). Of the 535 successful competitors, 140 had taken prizes on previous occasions, and to each of these was given a prize book in addition to the prize card.

Old Scholars' Meetings have been attended by larger numbers of the former scholars, now men and women, a large proportion of whom gave evidence of respectability. It was gratifying to find from the statements made that a large proportion attended the means of grace, and that some had become members of churches.

The Penny Banks in Ragged Schools are now 98.

Bands of Hope number in 24 Bands 2,022.

In 79 schools there are Lending Libraries, with 14,197 volumes for the home reading of the elder scholars and monitors of Ragged Schools. This is an increase of 1,352 volumes in the year.

Penny Readings, in the form of evenings' entertainments, have been adopted by many Schools with great advantage.

Mothers' Meetings are conducted in 82 Schools, and the number of members belonging to them is 2,525, which is an increase of 100 over the attendance of the previous year.

Ragged Churches were conducted in 91 Schools last year, and the total attendance was 5,838, which gives an average to each congregation of 64 persons.

The cultivation of window-gardens and plants in rooms has been fostered by the holding of Flower Shows, where plants have been grouped for exhibition, and for awarding and distributing prizes.

In the last Report reference was made to the Metropolitan and Provincial Working Classes' Exhibition, proposed to be held in the Agricultural Hall, and that space had been granted for displaying the productions of boys and girls who were scholars in Ragged Schools. A large space was fully occupied by the work sent in from more than 50 Schools, by upwards of 700 boys and girls. The articles were about 1,000 in number.

Efforts were made last summer to promote country excursions. Nearly every Ragged School in London had its day's holiday. To accomplish this it was needful to raise a small special fund for the poorest Schools. This was done by an appeal made by Lord Shaftesbury being kindly responded to and by which about 1,800, under the care of 100 teachers, spent August 8th in Petersham Park. By the kind invitation of Sir Morton and Lady Peto, a portion of the paid teachers spent a very pleasant day in July at their residence near Sevenoaks. And, on August 4th, the masters and mistresses, at the invitation of the Committee of this Society, spent a day in Bushey Park and Hampton Court Palace.

At the time of the last anniversary there were very uneasy feelings respecting the progress the cholera was then making towards this country. The Committee of this Society had taken what steps they could to prevent the evil of the threatened calamity by drawing the attention of the teachers and officers of the Schools to the use of the means best known for their protection against the approaching pestilence. Besides all this, the Committee requested the aid of Dr. Cross, of Spring Gardens, a member of the Committee, to prepare a paper upon the subject, directing what to do as a preventive and as a cure. Dr. Cross kindly complied, and the instructions thus obtained were printed, and largely circulated in all the Schools. Medicines, with printed instructions for immediate use when required, were prepared and sent free of cost to the Schools. It is hoped that by them the disease in many cases was arrested and some lives were saved.

During the prevalence of cholera many of the Schools continued to supply a daily meal to the most necessitous of the children. The scheme named in the last Report, of giving a fortnightly dinner in some of the Schools, has been continued, and with such success as to render it probable that the movement will be more systematically carried out by the formation of a central society, designated "The Destitute Children's Dinner Society."

In the last Report it was stated that the Rag Collecting Brigade had been deprived of its premises, which caused the suspension of its operations. A hope was, however, expressed of a revival under new management. This hope has since been partly realised, as on the 1st of July last "The Union Jack Rag Brigade" was started under an efficient committee, having its depot in Mitre Buildings, Limehouse.

There has been an increased number of boys employed by the various Shoe-Black Brigades. In 1865 the number of boys was 313, but in 1866 it was increased to 329. The earnings in 1865 were £7,002, and in 1866 they amounted to £7,502. The total earnings of the shoe-blacks from the commencement of the movement, in 1851, has now reached the important sum of £63,210.

At the time of holding the last Annual Meeting, clouds of a financial crisis were thickly gathering over the country in general and London in particular. At that time the Committee were depositors at the Bank of London, afterwards at the Consolidated Bank (Limited), and also at the Agra and Masterman's Bank (Limited). All these banks suspended and closed their doors. The two latter have been resuscitated, and the Committee are happy now to report that they have not only not sustained any loss by these failures, but during the time the money has been locked up, they have become entitled to

interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, and the repayment of the principal in full at stated periods.

From a careful examination of the balance-sheet, it will be seen that the Society's income has not increased. There has not been a diminution in the ordinary sources of income, but in the extraordinary sources of legacies. In the preceding year these amounted to £2,300, but in the last year to only £480. The Committee, however, have felt justified not only in keeping up the whole of the grants in aid to the numerous schools affiliated with the Society, but have added to them whenever it was proved that such addition would advance the welfare of Ragged Schools. This rendered it needful for the Committee to use £1,600 of their reserve fund.

The Committee, in conclusion, desire to acknowledge the good hand of their God that has hitherto directed and sustained them in carrying out this great work; they desire to thank the friends and supporters for the needful silver and the gold, which they have never yet withheld, but which has been forthcoming to sustain every well-directed effort; and lastly, they desire to appreciate the co-operation of helpers and teachers, who have so freely given their time, their attention, and their energies to this movement, and by which have been achieved the results stated in this Report. The Committee hope, by a continuance of wise councils, of persevering application, of united effort, of generous support, and by God's blessing upon these, to see the work in which they are engaged extend till the time shall come when Ragged Schools shall compass every neglected and destitute child in the land, and then for such terms as "neglected" and "destitute" to be no longer applicable to the children of our island home. Then, but not till then, may the designation "Ragged," as applied to this Society and the Schools in union with it, give place to another that will more fitly describe the improved order of things that may then exist. That happy period is in the future, and, from all appearance, some distance in the future. The work, therefore, must not only be continued, but extended and improved, to hasten on that time. And that that time may be hastened, is the earnest prayer of the Committee of the Ragged School Union.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

Held at Exeter Hall, on Monday Evening, May 6th, 1867.

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., IN THE CHAIR.

Among those present we noticed Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., Sir R. W. Carden; Revs. Dr. Matthew Hale Smith, Dr. Miller, Dr. Weir, W. Arthur, R. Berry, W. Cadman, G. Eller, J. H. Moran, W. Rose, T. H. Tarlton, A. Twiss, F. Tucker, Drs. Crawford, Cross, G. H. Davis, and Messrs. Joseph Payne, Bröckelmann of Heidelberg, G. Hall, late Governor of Parkhurst, W. L. Moody, of Chicago, &c., &c.

The proceedings were commenced by the Rev. F. Tucker offering prayer and the meeting singing

"All hail the power of Jesu's name."

Mr. J. G. GENT, the Secretary, then read the Report of the Committee and the Balance Sheet for the past year.

The Noble CHAIRMAN said,—My good friends, some wise folks are at this moment holding a meeting in Hyde Park, and we are holding a meeting in Exeter Hall. Which of the two will be more conducive to human improvement and human happiness I leave for you to determine. I have my own opinion, but I will say nothing; but this I will observe, that if they are as hot there (laughter) as we are here, I wish them joy. And I only hope they will follow our example and make their speeches as short as we will make ours. Now, I will address to you one or two observations only upon the Report which has just been read. As usual on many other occasions, I have had to congratulate you upon official kindness and official support. We are, in fact, embarrassed by official love. They are so ready to give us advice, so ready to give a narrative of our proceedings, so ready to draw deductions and state facts that are no facts at all, that I really must express the sense of the obligation in which we receive their assistance, not only in this single instance, but in many others in the shape of what we cannot possibly call else than an inexplicable heap of figures, traditions, and red tape. I say that we just address to them our recognition of their services, but also to say that although they promise us their help on all occasions we shall tell them, in the words of Shakespeare, that the promise would be "more honoured in the breach than in the observance." Now I want to know by what right or by what authority any official person, whatever be his position, has the right to say that he understands the working of the Ragged School system, and that our system is to take no care of the child after it shall have quitted the walls of a school —to say that there is nothing parental in our whole system—to say that we are wholly indifferent to the advance of the child after it shall have passed from the school into the world. I give the flattest contradiction that ordinary courtesy will permit to the statement. I tell that official that he knows nothing at all. I will not ascribe it to malignity, but I will ascribe it to ignorance, though his statements made in that way are akin to and border on malignity itself. Why, is not our whole system grounded upon the parental solicitude we have for the children? Does not our whole history show the care that we manifest on behalf of every child that passes under our tuition? What are the records of our proceedings, what are the records of those prizes that we bestow, what is the record of the emigration, what the narrative of those whom we have put out in domestic service, wha the history of those who year by yea are receiving the recognition in the prizes for the services which they have rendered, of the good conduct they have exhibited and of the noble manner, I thank God, in which they have fulfilled the hopes, the wishes, and the prayers of their teachers? (Applause.) Well now, to pass to another part of the Report. I am glad to say that I have to congratulate you now. Not as I have done in former years, to speak to you in terms of entreaty that you would fill up the ranks of voluntary teachers and come forward in this great cause. The addition of 212 to the list in this one year is most gratifying and creates a hope of better things. The whole system depends on the voluntary teachers; for although we must, to keep the matter fixed and going, as it were, have paid teachers—to whom be all honour for their great care and noble services, and for the

zeal and feeling and affection which are far beyond in merit the amount of their salaries—I say that the whole system turns upon the system of voluntary teachers, and it is a matter of great rejoicing to find that the public is at last arising to a sense of its duty. And I trust they will address themselves to the great work and overthrow all the great evils which still exist. For, although, by God's providence we have some 30,000 children in our schools and under our tuition, yet bear this in mind, there are yet some 30,000 that ought to be brought within the range of your care and influence and tuition. They all want to be brought under the sound of the Gospel. Why, if we could but effect that, I would undertake to guarantee that we would produce such a result upon the most abandoned and the most wicked, that I should invite, without hesitation or fear, all the roughs in Whitechapel and Shoreditch, and I should be very glad to give them a tea in Hyde Park. I believe they would be as good company as anybody else. And I tell you what I verily believe, that bad as many of the roughs are, wild and lawless as many of them are, I believe that the effect of the Ragged School system, spread as it is over the metropolis, has produced as softening effect upon them; and without it you would have numbered your roughs instead of by tens of thousands by hundreds of thousands, and you would have numbered them not only by acts of mischief, but by acts of violence and fury. I tell you, you may congratulate yourselves, under God's providence you have surely and unconsciously breathed good into these children, and you will see this come out in some great day of necessity. (Applause.) The prizes are to my mind of incalculable value; and I think you will see what an admirable test it is of your system, that notwithstanding the stringency of your provisions, so many were found capable of receiving those prizes, and those who were rejected, were not rejected from any misconduct, were not rejected from any incapacity, but were rejected simply because, owing to circumstances, they were not able to fulfil to a minute degree every one of the requirements enacted of them. Now to you voluntary teachers and to you teachers, I address myself—you admirable set of men and women! I have told you this ten thousand times before, but I will tell you again, I love you from the very bottom of my heart. See what under the providence of God you have been able to do, see what you did in the day of necessity and trouble. Why these Ragged Schools became great receptacles for the ragged, the hungry, and famishing; and then those teachers slaved day and night. There they were administering relief to the famishing and the starving; and I tell you, were it not for the labours of those teachers, there are thousands who would have died actually of starvation. And by-the-by, a very good thing it is that they had been taught how to cook—a very good thing for the children to be taught how to cook; and I say let some of them put in an advertisement, "Wanted, a place as a good plain cook." (Laughter.) And as to your experience, you could say we have had as good a turn as most people. Because I can tell I have to dine out myself; and I have found that what is called a plain cook is the rarest thing in the world. There are plenty of French cooks, who can make all sorts of side dishes, but there is nothing more difficult to get than a good leg of mutton or a round of beef properly done. (Laughter.) Now the Report that was read to-day was a Report of infinite value. See what a record it is of operations, see what mighty agencies are at work, see what an extent of good is being done over the surface of the metropolis, and yet that Report can give you no more than a notion of what is being effected at the moment. This Report only gives you an account of the operations of the Union, but if you want to have a better knowledge of the details, you must take the trouble to read some of the many local reports and see to what an extent the system is carried out in many parts of wretched and miserable districts. I will not enumerate the name of any schools, because that might appear

to be invidious; but there are some places in the midst of a dense seething population in a state the knowledge of which is barely credible, and which could not be believed without persons had an opportunity of verifying by their own eyes and hearing it with their own ears. Now, I observe—and this shall be the last observation I shall make—your attention is called every day and hour to the necessity of those schools, and to the maintenance of the system you have adopted. There are agencies at work that I am sorry to say are increasing the amount of the ragged children. I refer to the displacement of the dwellings of the poor, the reckless and hasty manner in which hundreds and thousands of families are turned into the streets, the manner in which they are taught to congregate in filthy masses, two or three families in one room, all the crowding and congregating and want of healthy accommodation, all these things are tending to increase the number of children in the Ragged Schools. This brings on immorality, it brings on discomfort, it brings on ill health. All this overcrowding and discomfort brings on habits of inebriety and wretchedness, and all these things work together to produce children for the Ragged School—children who are spawned under the influence of that abominable state of things. And while our schools are doing all we know day by day to meet the evil, this refinement and civilisation are adding and increasing it. It is in vain that we do what we can to improve the working class, so long as we have all these operations which tend to deprive hundreds and thousands of working men of their homes. I observe many houses pulled down, but as far as I can see, none are built up in their place. It is true a few spring up in the suburbs, but they are for working men of large wages and great receipts; not for the great mass of our people who live from hand to mouth, but for a certain class who can only afford to pay 1s. or 2s. per week for their lodgings there is no provision at all. They are turned out of the wretched tenements in which they are living, and being so turned out they are forced to huddle together in rooms, and thus the evil is increased to a fearful extent. And when all these evils against which we have been fighting—I tell you so long as these difficulties continue—of course you will see an immense multiplication in the number of the Ragged Schools, and you will see upon that the necessity not only to keep up the system but also to strive with extended exertions. I tell you it is a very great work in which you are engaged. I confess that I know no work that I think so conducive to human happiness. I think that there is no work that can be so acceptable in the sight of our blessed Lord as this care that you manifest for the most destitute, forsaken, and oppressed of the infantile race. It is a grand conception on your part, and a grand conception most worthily executed, and I trust you will feel the grace and comfort of it in your own hearts. It seems to me a sort of exchange, in which the teacher derives more benefit than the taught—it seems to me a sort of commercial transaction of a high and holy character, in which you export, as it were, your money, your comforts, your thoughts, your labours, your responsibility, and your prayers in furtherance of the eternal welfare of those unhappy children: and you receive in return peace of mind, satisfaction of conscience, the prayers of the oppressed, the hopes and wishes of the redeemed, you have a happy conscience, and a peaceful prospect before you, and this gratification of your conscience before God that under his grace you have done your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you. (Loud applause.)

The Rev. Dr. MILLER said,—I rise to move, "That the Report now read be adopted, printed, and circulated under the direction of the Committee, and that the gentlemen whose names appear in the printed list do form the Committee and Officers of the Society for the year 1867-8." There seems to be an understanding that the speeches are not to exceed ten minutes in length. Now, my

lord, with regard to the Report of which you have spoken, it did by your lordship what I think the Report of this Ragged School Committee ought to do and always does. If one of our American cousins from across the sea were to say, "Now I am come to London in the month of May, and there is a nobleman whom I can see, and I should like to see him to the best advantage, and hear him to the best advantage, now do tell me if you know anything about Exeter Hall, or where I should go." I should say, "If you want to see Lord Shaftesbury most on fire, if you want to see him most at home, don't even go to the Bible Society—though I have heard him say that he loves that better than any other; don't go and listen to him on the platform of the Foreign Mission Society—that I have heard him say is the most important society in the world; don't go and hear him speak on behalf of the Pastoral Aid Society—I have heard him speak of that in terms far surpassing both the former: but hear him upon the Ragged School platform, and you hear him in his best." Our Report to-night has been full of congratulation; therefore I don't wonder that the noble chairman was fully up to concert pitch and in the high spirits in which he spoke. You have an increase of day-scholars, you have an increase of Sunday-scholars, you have an increase of evening scholars, you have an increase of teachers; but you have what appears to me to be so very, very important, you have the fact that many of your scholars are developing into teachers. And I am also heartily rejoiced to see an idea which I felt it my duty to throw out in Birmingham some years ago, is now being largely acted upon in many large towns; that is, that some of our richer congregations in the suburbs are beginning to take up the missionary work in these districts which are so much in want of it. I believe—and I have said it over and over again—I believe that our large towns will become utterly unmanageable and bankrupt of means and efforts, unless some of these rich congregations in the suburbs shall take some of these town churches in tow. This is the way in which we may endeavour to equalise the matter; and so he who has gathered much shall have nothing over, and he who has not enough shall have no lack. But my lord, in the very few words which I shall address on this very hot evening I am going to take a very unpromising subject. My key-note is one short line of the report: "Failures there have been, and far too many." Now, I hold it to be one of the very first conditions on which a man or a woman must work for God, that he must not demand immediate success, and not only so, but he must not bargain with God for any apparent success at all. I have no hesitation in saying that if we looked into this question deeply, we should find that we are utterly incapable to say what failure is. No man knows whether he has failed or not in working for God; and I have very little hesitation in saying that when the secrets of all our workings shall have been disclosed and all these complicated influences shall have been laid bare which utterly baffle the most subtle and keen analysis now, it will be seen that no work for God has been utterly in vain. No work such as this, based upon the principles of the Bible and which is carried out in dependence on God in a spirit of faith, love and prayer, can possibly fail. And, my lord, when I look to the Bible, if I look at a great many of the grandest efforts made by God's servants, recorded in the Bible, I should be disposed to say the Bible was a record of a series of failures. And I believe—and I ever desire to approach the Bible with the deepest reverence—looking at the prophecies of Scripture, I am not speaking rashly to night, when I say that in the anticipation of his work upon our earth, work for our salvation, our Redeemer is represented himself, by the pen of his prophet, anticipating the incredulity and unbelief of those to whom he should come, and this not only in the passage, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" but also in "Surely, I have spent my strength for nought, I have laboured in vain." This you will observe is appli-

cable to the Messiah in the pages of prophecy; and when I follow our blessed Lord throughout his earthly ministry, I have no hesitation in deliberately saying that if we had stood not only at the Cross, but if we had stood by our Lord's side when he went up to heaven, and had judged simply by the calculations of reason and sense, we should have said that the sufferings and incarnation of the Son of God had been a failure. I say it deliberately, because we should upon the calculations of sense never have seen that all this should have been, the purposes of God developed as he had indicated in previous ages. See the record of the effect Paul made by that remarkable address on Mars' Hill to the men of Athens—see how Luke shuts up the narrative abruptly, by saying after the sermon "certain men believed"—and yet do you suppose, my lord, that that sermon upon Mars' Hill has been delivered in vain? is it a failure now? No, it was a failure in immediate result, but it has been blessed of God to many sinners, and will be blessed of God to the end of time. And, my lord, when I look abroad upon the face of nature nothing is more calculated to strike the thoughtful than the enormous waste we may see in the physical world. There is an enormous waste. Our orchards are just now full of trees flushed with the beautiful apple-blossom, but not half those apple-blossoms will stand till autumn and bear their ripened fruit. How many the occasions when a single night's frost or a single night's east wind will cause the hopes of weeks and months to be a failure; and I can tell you of some failures which have been a sad grief to me. I was living a year or so ago in Birmingham, where I had a garden, in which I had never grown a solitary pea, or a solitary potato, or a patch or a flower. There were trees in it, and they looked all right; but if you only just rubbed your glove against the rind you would find that they were so rotten and decayed as to be hardly worth the name of trees. I have come now to a most beautiful neighbourhood, and since I have come to it I have to such an extent turned gardener! Only the other day I had such an enormous quantity of peas, that by the time the young ducks came in I should have not only enough for my own use, but that I should have to go to Covent Garden market with them. And I had not only peas to eat, but sweet peas to smell. I put a great many sweet peas in, and now behold my failures. The slugs have been beforehand with the peas that are for my table, and now there are all the corpses of the peas lying on the top of the ground baking in the sun, instead of growing up to maturity. Now, my lord, I don't know a more instructive storehouse of lessons than a garden, and I have derived much instruction when working in mine. I often think, if I could only get the weeds out of my parish as easily and as soon as I can get them out of my garden, the task would be much easier than it is. Well, then, don't let us despair because there are no immediate results. The slugs will get at some of your agencies and destroy them, and the birds will carry away seeds from some hearts, but I have great faith that, where there is seed sown, there will be some fruit. I shall never recover my peas; but you may recover that work which apparently is lost for years in the hearts of these children; and who knows but that, at some distant day, this work may spring up when you are dead and gone, and you may meet the child whom you have been the means of bringing to Jesus in heaven above. There is only one more thought, my lord, that I would endeavour to impress upon this meeting, and that is with reference to the teaching. It is a great mistake to suppose that it does not follow the children to their homes. I believe that the best way in the world to get at the homes of the people of England is to get at the children of the people of England. In the first place, it is intensely difficult—and no man knows it better than Lord Shaftesbury—to get at the men. Many a child, I believe, carries a lesson home, and I believe that many a thoughtful working man

must, in some of his quieter and better moments, think, "How is it that all these hundreds of Sunday-school teachers and day-school teachers are labouring for my child without pay or reward? There must be something in that religion which furnishes the motive and the mainspring." (Applause.)

The Rev. Dr. MATTHEW HALE SMITH, of New York, said,—The first thing that strikes me in looking over this vast auditory, and considering the subject that has drawn you together here with such sympathetic ties and cords, is the fact that we do not believe, first, that the children that are neglected have no concern with us; we do not feel that they are not our children to look after, to take care of, to bless: it isn't our business that they have no kind home, that they never saw a bright day, that their earliest hours are clouded with sorrow, and that all life with them is but an indignant opposition to government. We are very like a distinguished gentleman that lived in America, who was appointed a justice of the peace, which don't amount to much. He was placed at Rhode Island; but when he got there he didn't know what to do. But he was told that there would be two things he would be required to do: one was to keep the peace, and the other to marry anybody that wanted to be married. Well, he thought he understood it, and certainly he hadn't much to do, for it was a one-horse town to which his jurisdiction was confined. He got rather tired of his quiet life, and he travelled out of it to New York, and on his journey he saw a couple of men fighting, and he thought it was a fine opportunity for displaying his authority; so he mounted a hydrant, and proclaimed himself justice of the peace, and ordered them to disperse. The result was tha somebody knocked him off the hydrant, carried him to the station-house, and kept him in a comfortable lodging till the morning. In the morning he complained of his treatment, and told the case, when they said, however much of a justice of the peace he might be in Rhode Island, he weren't any at all in New York. Shortly after he got back with this trouble in his head, he was called upon to marry two persons. After he had pronounced them man and wife, he said to them, "Mind, you are man and wife while you stay in the State of Rhode Island, but directly you go out of it you must look out for yourselves." The second thought that I wish to leave with you is, that we have no faith in the reformatory power of the Gospel at our own doors. We believe it is a very good thing for the Fejee Islands, and a very good thing for the Sandwich Islands, and a very good thing for India, and a very good thing for all such places, but it won't do good here. Now in the city of New York, I can go and strike the great bell at the hall, used to give warning of fire, and I can bring round me as many different nationalities in ten minutes as Peter preached to on the day of Pentecost; and yet we let these people we can get in crowds go without instruction; we let them go that are perishing, and we are rewarded by the evil we have created, by disaffection and disloyalty; and instead of taking this class of people, and making them the security and basis for the Government—a loyal working people—we let them be made the worst obstacle, and honour the Government that makes them so. Now, if we had faith that the Gospel could be given to these men, and these might here and everywhere be converted by it, we should do a great and mighty work. We have learnt that we cannot touch the fathers and convert the mothers unless through their children; should we not reach them, then, through their children? But without some regard for their bodies, we have no ground to work upon; unless we pave the way first, by doing something for the hunger of their bodies, how can we get at their hearts? There were assembled yesterday in the city of New York, probably over 5,000 poor neglected children, all gathered from the vilest homes for a day's plea-

sure and a good tea, through the instrumentality of a lady, who, living in the higher walks of life, and having a good deal of money, has consecrated herself and her fortune to God. She said, "I will go out to find and minister to the miserable, the sick, and the wretched, and I will do all I can to benefit them." She made up her mind to go to the very lowest parts of the city, where these ragged children lived, and she told her friends so, but they advised her not to go down. "It is not safe for you to go by yourself," they said; but she said, "I *will* go through there." "But," said they, "you will be torn to pieces; they are desperadoes there; it is the rendezvous of wickedness and crime." "I care not," said she, "God's little children are there, and I will go on the blessed Sabbath, with His sunshine with me, and see what I can do." Seeing she was determined, they urged her, if she *would* go, to lay off her nice-looking things, and put on some old ones, and look as much like a ragged woman as possible;—and it is an idea with many people, that anything is good enough for God's children. Why in your Ragged Schools I notice that you have benches without any backs to them for the children to sit on. I have gone into your schools many a time, and seen the poor children sitting on them tired and weary, and I would just like for your committee to go and sit there for a couple of hours, and see how they like it. They would very soon find they wanted some backers that they don't have now. We take the ground that, as God has given us this beautiful earth to enjoy, the sun to carry glory and beauty in its beams, and has made the flowers to bloom, He has given us a strong love for the beautiful. We take these little children that never saw a pretty thing in their days. When ladies offer their services as teachers, we learn if their heart is right for God. And then we see if they have got what is a very nice thing in a woman, a soft voice. Why the soprano singer in the city of New York was brought up at one of these institutions. She was taken in when she was a little child three years old. They saw her wandering about, and they said, "Come in, my stricken one!" and they adopted her, and gave her a sound musical education, and now she can earn her own living, and a good one too; but she is not ashamed to go every Sunday with her pieces of music, and with her hymns cheer up the children in the place she was brought up in. There is no doubt about the success; there is no doubt but what you will find that there is in this a mighty and glorious power. I heard a man say the other day, in regard to this movement, speaking of these ragged children and these Ragged Schools, he said, "It will get them above their station." I would like to know where that station is which is above any man to whom God has given good brains and a good heart. (Applause.) That is just what is wanted, my lord. You want to show these boys that there is property to be got, and a position to be attained, and that they have just as good a right to it as anybody else. I tell you, my lord, that there is many a boy at the bottom of the shaft at Trafalgar Square, that holds as noble a heart and deserves the honour that is due to Lord Nelson. And many a boy wonders what his career will be, as that boy wondered when he sat singing on a bridge and dabbling his feet in the water, and made up his mind that he would buy the old homestead of his father when he became a man. If he had disclosed his desire and intention, he would have been hooted and subjected to derision; but he went steadily on, and on, and was so successful, that at last he received the thanks of the nation and the Parliament for what he had done. I tell you that when the time comes for them, you are going to get men of might and power from these Ragged Schools; your engineers, your inventors, are coming from them, and if the Ministry don't mind, they will overlap them too. I see that my time has run out, and I want to say one word as I sit down, and

it is this: this movement among the poor and the lowly and the destitute has been as well understood by us as it is with you; we have learnt much from your movement; and it has given me peculiar joy to know that you lead us in so many of these reformatory institutions; and as we shall before another year closes, build a house that will be devoted to children, and to the neglected population of New York, where the Gospel will be taught every Sunday afternoon and every Sunday night, we propose to put into it a memorial window in commemoration of the labours of his lordship, the noble chairman of this meeting. (Much applause.) And we propose to select, out of his long and useful life, one portion and one act, which to my mind is more worthy of the pencil of a painter than any other; and one that will live and travel on till its story is in every mouth, and that will live when monuments of granite shall crumble to pieces—when the tallest column shall fall, and be gathered and numbered with the dust of ages. I refer to that hour when this cause was weak and low—when the effort to redeem and relieve and save this class was considered chimerical, like what we read of Don Quixote. Then this noble lord stood at the door of the House of Commons, with his hat in his hand, asking subscriptions to save the fallen and to bless the needy. (Loud applause.) I desire to tell you also, that you have the sympathy of the poor and lowly in America. Whatever politicians may say, whatever they may believe, the great heart of America beats in sympathy with England, the fatherland of our country. We set up for ourselves ninety-odd years ago, and our old mother, like most mothers of a family that don't like the daughters to set up and get married, she thought we could not keep house; but we thought otherwise. But still we love the old homestead where our fathers dwelt in years gone by; we honour their graves and visit them with tears of affection; and the only rivalry between America and England shall be a rivalry in good works; the only jealousy shall be a jealousy as to who shall lead in the great work of blessing the fallen, of carrying liberty and relief to the oppressed, and salvation and help to them that have no helper. (Loud applause.)

The Rev. FRANCIS TUCKER moved the following Resolution:—"That this meeting, being fully aware of the successful results of Ragged Schools, deeply sympathizes with the work and object of the Ragged School Union, and desires to record its heartfelt thanks to Almighty God for His blessings so richly vouchsafed to the Ragged School movement." It is believed of me, that whilst I admire jewelled fingers, I have a hearty grasp for the hand that has grown hard with work. It is believed of me, that while I admire gilded butterflies, I have a greater admiration for working-bees, and that the fruit of their labour is to my inmost soul as honey and the honeycomb. I have been seen hanging about some very low places in this city. I am known to be on friendly terms with more than one costermonger. I have been actually observed entering the Victoria Theatre and the Pavilion Theatre, and of all days in the week, on a Sunday evening; and it has even been rumoured that on the stages of those theatres I have presumed to preach the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God. And when I have been preaching on the stages of those theatres, I have satisfied myself with the simple attire which I ordinarily wear. I have not put on any garment of green, or gold, or blue. My lord, a word of encouragement to the Ragged School teachers in this assembly. I remember your lordship told us at one of your meetings, that you once met with the owner of an immense flock of sheep, and you asked him, "How many sheep have you, do you think?" and his reply was, "I don't know how many sheep I have; this I know, I have 1,500 shepherds." My lord, I find that you have got between 29,000 and 30,000 sheep here in London, and I know, and I rejoice to

know, that you have 3,241 voluntary unpaid shepherds in the schools of this city. (Applause.) I suppose, my lord, I am addressing many hundreds, if not one or two thousand, of these Ragged School teachers here to-night; and I am told, that if I have done any good since I came to London, ten years ago, it has been by saying a cheering word to these teachers at meetings like the present. I cannot help giving them an encouraging word to-night. My dear friends, you have found out a great secret, and it is that the way to happiness is in not seeking to be always happy, but in working, working, working, and ever working for God. Down on your lordship's estate in Dorsetshire I might find a little boy, with his shears, busy at a hedge, trimming it with its spring trimming, and trying to get it in apple-pie order, and he sees a bird fly over his head; down go the shears, and away he goes after it, and a rare chase it takes him, over field and coppice and orchard; on and on flies the bird, and on goes the boy; he wants to find out that bird's nest; he fails, and comes back, very very tired; takes up his shears and begins to clip and clip and clip, and there's the bird's nest, in the hedge before him all the time. My lord, there are multitudes of young people running after this and after that, in search of happiness. Why, they go to the theatre, to ball-rooms, to music-halls, and I cannot tell where beside, and a rare chase this bright-plumed bird leads them, and back they come, weary. I have not the heart to tell you how weary, for sometimes it is the weariness of utter despair. I tell these young people, and if there are some such come here to-day, side by side with the Ragged School teachers—I tell them to take up the shears, and clip and clip and clip away the wild sprays in the young time of human life, in the midst of our Ragged Schools; and there, in the midst of the wild hedge they will find the bird's-nest, and they will find the bird upon it. (Applause.) Oh, my lord, there are sacred associations connected with this topic! The Grandest of all Workers our world ever saw set us the example. Here was the joy that was set before Him; but when He came into the world, He did not say, I have come to enjoy myself, but to work and work and work. It is not for lips of man to tell how, but never did a ploughman keep his hands so steadily upon the plough—never did a sower so freely and so liberally cast abroad the seed as He did instruction on the mountain-top, down by the lake, in the synagogue, on the high road, in the midst of the fishermen of Galilee, and in the midst of the Pharisees of Jerusalem. He worked always; and if he rested on the well-side of Sychar, he worked while he rested; and if he sheltered in the home at Bethany, he worked while he sheltered there, and that was the way he partook of the joy that was set before him. (Applause.) Because, my lord, these 3,241 Ragged School teachers are doing something in imitation of that Great Worker's example, I count it a privilege to congratulate them to-night. Take for your motto more than you have ever done, those grand words, "Christ pleased not himself." First came the suffering, then came the glory; and because you are imitating that example, I say God speed you; I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. I know the time is gone, but I have a word of encouragement that I would say very briefly. There are many adversaries—many that are opposing the most sacred part of your work, my dear friends, the teachers in the Ragged Schools—that part of the work which is most Christian and most truly heavenly; and if you will accept another motto from me this evening, it shall be this:—"In nothing terrified by your adversaries." Some of your adversaries have grown very old; they have been at their work all through the ages before and since the Lord ascended to heaven; they have not done much, however. Christianity ought to have been swept from the face of the earth long before now,

according to their computation; but according to my perception and joy, Christianity is here still, and as alive and vigorous to-day, and ready to do battle with its enemies, as ever it was since the Lord ascended to heaven. And now, my friends, I have done. I like to look back 1,800 years ago, when the Great Worker was here on earth, and John, his predecessor, was in prison; and whether it was John's faith that failed, or John's disciples' faith, I cannot tell; but he sent two of his disciples to Jesus, and said, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" It seems to me, my lord, our blessed Saviour did not immediately answer the question, but seems to have motioned his visitors to stand by; and there they stood, and what did they see? Such a procession coming into the presence of the Master as must have filled their eyes and moved their hearts. In they came, with blinded vision, with deafened hearing, with rackened nerve, with struggling epilepsy, some of them demoniacs, with the mingled fury of earth and hell. They came. He spoke, and the blind eye smiled upon him, and the deaf ear listened to him, and the tongue of the dumb began to sing, and the poor demoniac stood in his right mind, and then our blessed Lord said to his two visitors, "Go and tell John the things that ye have heard and seen." That is the answer to the question, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" There is a little island that three thousand years ago was buried in obscurity, and buried in the depths of utter barbarism; its coast rock-bound, its cliffs rugged, its seas stormy, and its inhabitants rugged and stormy too. In that island might was right, age was a burden, and woman was a slave. I want to know, my lord, the condition of that island now. I have passed it over with swimming eyes and a swelling heart. I have gone through its towns and cities, and heard them full of the busy hum of an industrious population. I have gone into its courts of justice, and found that might was no longer right, that the law stretched out its restraint before the powerful, and its protection round the poor. I have gone into its homes, its happy, happy homes, and seen woman honoured and blessed, and old age tended like an infant on the warm fireside; and more than all that, I have seen its City Missions, its Foreign Missions, its Sunday Schools, and its Ragged Schools, and I know that in one city this evening there are 3,241 unpaid teachers connected with this Institution, and I say, Go tell the unbeliever what you hear and see, and then let them say whether the Master, whom we serve so feebly, and yet so lovingly, is He that should come, or must we look for another? (Loud applause.)

The Rev. WILLIAM ARTHUR (President of the Wesleyan Conference), in seconding the Resolution, said,—I think that it is very difficult to select from a subject so wide and multifarious, touching one's sympathy and feeling at so many angles, as the one before us, on one or two points of which one might fitly dwell for a moment. This being so, I purpose speaking on the subject touched by Dr. Miller, namely, the difficulty of deciding when you had actually accomplished a failure. I hope no one will ever conceal apparent failure, or ever try to make anything appear a success which is not really so. I would not have you to overrate success, but never, as long as any one has been under your hands for an hour on this side of eternity, never give up the hope that the seed sown in that hour may yet spring up and bear fruit, by the blessing of God. I believe, my lord, that in very many cases it will be found that even in those who in boyhood, youth, and early life, present no feature at all to encourage us, there will in later days appear the fruit of repentance and belief. I remember Mr. Read, of Tunbridge Wells, telling me that when he was a magistrate in the centre of Tasmania he one Sunday morning saw in the little chapel a man called Paramatta Jack, the most notorious criminal in the

¡sland, a man who had committed every crime, and received almost every punishment. He observed him there a second Sunday, and he said to himself, "Jack is a changed man." After the service he went up to him and said, "Jack, you seem to be different from what you used to be." He had very little to say. Mr. Read said to him, "Will you go down to my place and take dinner with my people?" "No, sir," he said, "I can't do it." "Why not? You have walked a long way, I suppose?" "I have walked twelve miles this morning." "And have you to walk that distance back?" "Yes, sir." "Then why not go and take your dinner?" "I can't, sir." "Why not?" "Well, sir, you see I am an old man now, and I have led a bad life, and I have forgotten all my uncle ever taught me when I was a boy; and before I came out here he told me I ought to have been hanged already, and I knew it; but now God has changed my heart, and I come here on the Sunday morning and hear the sermon; but if I went to your people to dinner they would be talking about something else, and I should forget all about it; but now after I have heard the sermon I go into the bush and lay it in; and in the evening I hear another sermon, and as I am walking the twelve miles home I lay that in too. And I can get hold of them pretty well in then, and in that way I can get on." (Applause.) And this poor old man after seventy years of age taught himself to read. And my friend tells me he shall never forget one night seeing Jack sitting with the New Testament on his knees, and looking up, not knowing that any one saw him, bursting into tears and praises; and when he saw there was some person present, "Oh, sir," he said, "Did you ever hear the like of that? To think that that should be written! I have read, 'Rejoice evermore, and again I say, Rejoice.' Only to think that such a thing could be written for the likes of me!" Now, my lord, any one that had toiled for the good of that soul would for fifty or sixty years have set that case down as one not only of failure, but of utter and lamentable failure. Let us never resign ourselves to that thought while we are seeking souls; we are on Christ's own errand, and we shall not fail with his blessing. There is something very touching in the name "Ragged School." Ragged tells of a body; School tells of a soul. Ragged tells of present poverty; School tells of future possibility. Ragged tells of a poor home, a poor father, a poor mother, poor fare, it tells of cold nights and mornings, perhaps without a breakfast, it tells of a home that has no friends to get; a School tells of friends, and thought, and plans, and sympathies, and prospects that are opening, after all, in spite of rags that testify to the circumstances of the body; the School may drop seed into that mind that shall lift it above the rags, and above the home, and above the circumstances, and above the discouragements; and surely we can join with our friend from the other side of the Atlantic in wishing to see the way perfectly clear from the lowest spot where a human being may begin life to the highest pinnacle where a human being may end. (Applause.) Some one said, my lord, that if we would wish to see your lordship to the best advantage we must come and see you on the platform. Now I don't at all credit that. The other day I was going down a place called Chequer Alley, out of which a great many queer courts run, and I saw a crowd of not very respectable people, I admit, but they were crowding together and looking out anxiously, and as I arrived at the end of the court one of them, certainly not in very handsome attire, said to me, "Is he coming, sir?" "Yes," I said, "he is;" and presently when his lordship appeared with several gentlemen they asked, "Which is him, sir?" I said, "That gentleman there, the tall one;" and it was soon known that the "tall one with the small hat" was him. "That's him," says one;" "Bless him!" says another. And I thought there was a great deal in that "Bless him;" and I believe that any one that wants to hear Lord Shaftes-

bury in his best, I mean speak best, ought to go and see him under such circumstances, surrounded by hundreds of these people, and hear his heart poured out to them, just as I had the opportunity of hearing it this evening. (Applause.) And I say, God grant to us, as a country, that we may have more and more men raised up who will go to the very depths of degradation and misery as he does. What! talk of failure with 30,000 children in the schools? Why, my lord, at that time when you stood at the Speaker's door of the House of Commons—which some of us, I am ashamed to say, have heard of for the first time to-night—and begged a subscription from every friend you could ask, how many wise men in all the country would have said it would ever be possible to get 30,000 of these outcasts? They would have said, "If ever you can get 1,000 of them it will be a very wonderful thing; and as to hoping that an army of voluntary teachers will go into all that wretchedness and misery it is quite absurd. Why how can you ever expect it?" Nowhere but out of the Eternal Fount of the benefit of mankind, in the love of God, and where the truth of God comes into the hearts of God's people, will you find men and women ever able and ready to do the good work; and it appears to me that the wealth of the Church of Christ for her purposes lies in unpaid labour (applause); the labour of men and women that work because they love the work, and that seek in the work God's blessing, and rejoice in that as their entire reward. And then we must remember that these 30,000 children have presented many an instance already of clear and beautiful success. Many a poor child singing the songs it has learnt at school has been the means of winning his own mother to listen to the Gospel; many a poor boy showing some little bit of dress that he has got at school has been the means of inspiring his own father with a respect for his child, and a desire to see his child o oking respectable. And a great thing it is when you get into the heart of a man ready to spend in drink everything he can get without any care as to how his child looks, or his wife or his house is looking, or even himself,—it is a good thing, I say, if you can get into him this feeling, "I should like to see my children looking a little more respectable." I heard that a man who was changed in heart was asked about his conversion, and he said, "If you want to know whether I am converted just ask our Bet; and just ask the children if they run away noo when they see me, and if they run up the stairs noo; ask them if they do not run to meet me noo, and if they do not when I sit down with them gather round me noo, and like to climb up on my knee noo." (Applause.) And this is the best test; and when this change takes place in the depraved heart, God's blessing be upon those who have been His instrument to make the change. There is a story in that Report that is very beautiful, and with which I have been very much struck. Among the many beautiful things you do, my lord, I do not know that there is any I like better than taking these poor children into the country and giving them an airing, and finding amusement for them in the fields, which some of them have scarcely ever seen. Well, here is a story of one of these excursions. When the day was over, and they were coming back, some ten or twelve miles, a poor little girl was seen at the station crying bitterly. Some one asked, "What is the matter?" and the little girl sobbed out, "I have lost my ticket, and they won't let me go back." And a ragged boy came up and said, "You take my ticket; I will be able to find my way home." (Applause.) The Committee do not tell us the name of this boy, but there was a second boy, who found another girl, and he imitated the first, he did the very same thing; and they give us his name, they tell us his name was Smith, so that of course, if we want him, we can find him out. Well, these two lads having given up their tickets, fell to their trudging,

and walked their way over the ten or twelve miles to London, and got home about twelve o'clock at night. Now, my lord, I think there was many a thing done in the days of chivalry not more beautiful than that, although the knight might have had a golden spear and a splendid charger. I believe, my lord, that some people think that if you institute any order in connection with the Union it must be the order of the Bath only; but I think if your lordship should ever institute anything of the kind, you will admit that the limbs that performed that work have a very considerable claim to the blue riband.

Dr. G. H. Davis, in moving the third Resolution — "That this meeting rejoices over every additional effort for meeting the necessities of poor children, and especially that of suburban churches adopting neglected and densely populated localities in London for Ragged School mission work"—said: There was one additional effort for meeting the necessities of poor children mentioned in the Report which struck me as exceedingly admirable, and that is giving them periodically, as frequently as possible, a good dinner. Now, there are some who may think that this is a comparative trifle; and yet how can you get to the heart of a child—how can you speak to him of his spiritual condition, of which he knows nothing—except through his bodily state, of which he is so perfectly conscious? He knows that he has a body, he knows that it is frequently anguished with hunger; but he knows comparatively little about his mind, he knows little of the worth of the immortal soul: if, therefore, you would win him to the higher, it must be through the medium of the lower nature. You do well, therefore, to remember that he is ragged, even before you remember that you must give him schooling. We must never forget, my lord, the great lesson we are taught in this matter from the Holy Book, that when this world was made, and when man was made in God's own image, not only beautiful in form, but lovely in character; and we must remember that our Father in Heaven considered not merely his moral and his spiritual wants, but first of all he considered his natural and his temporal wants, and prepared a beautiful Paradise in which he should spend his days. And let us not forget that when He who made the world and he who made man, himself became man, so that he might redeem us from death and destruction, he showed his estimate of the value of it in all those wondrous miracles which he performed. Is not this the very distinction of all Christianity in which the Son of Man showed that he came "to seek and to save that which was lost?" and was it not through this medium of the good that was done to the body that the immortal soul was frequently rescued? And, once more, let us never forget—for in the midst of all our enjoyment it is well for us to be most serious on this subject—when we stand before the Great Redeemer, when he comes the second time as Judge, he will not ask us whether we have preached to large audiences in church or chapel; he will not ask us whether we have made this hall ring with the tone of our voice: but he will ask us the question whether we have fed the hungry, whether we have clothed the naked, whether we have visited the prisoner—whether, in fact, we have been bound up with the great and glorious work both of Ragged Schools and Reformatories. (Applause.) These are serious thoughts for us, and therefore I say you do well in making this additional effort for ministering to the necessities of the children. I have been very much struck, my lord, in this meeting, that while it is a meeting of those who instruct those who are gathered together in these academies, if we may so call them — these Ragged Schools, I look round about me and I see not one ragged person, but I see all clothed and respectable, so as to indicate comfortable circumstances. And is not the thing beautiful that you, who are in the enjoyment of all that renders life most happy, should be those who go

down to the very slums of our city in order to gather together those who have scarcely a garment to cover their nakedness, or scarcely a meal to feed their hunger? And it is not only here that I am reminded of this. Yesterday evening I happened to be at that chapel to which reference was made: the Rev. Henry Allon was preaching on behalf of New Nichol Street, and it was my duty to attend him, which I did with pleasure; and it was beautiful to me to see, on my way from the house from which I myself was going to enjoy that ministration, a number of young men and young ladies leaving not only all the comforts which they enjoyed at home, but also leaving their place of worship, where they might have sat and listened with great delight to the sound of the Word preached, in order that they might go themselves to the Ragged Schools of Spitalfields and elsewhere. And this surely must be impressed upon all the wealthy churches of the city. When I look on the state of matters in that part of the city where I happen to dwell—Bayswater—and then go to the east of London, and see how they are gathered together there in mighty masses, it seems to me that until those congregations in the wealthier part of our city understand their responsibility, and regularly make collections, and not collections only, but also regularly send out their very best men and women, regularly induce them to give up their peculiar comforts and joys under the ministry of the Word, send them down to the various parts of the east which are neglected, we shall not exemplify as we should the true spirit of the Master, He who was ready and willing for our sakes to become poor in order that we might be rich. We ask you not to give up your riches in this cause, we ask you not to leave your beautiful homes, which are adorned with all that art and science can afford, but we do ask you to remember your brethren and your sisters who are not placed in an equally happy position with yourselves—to remember the poor little outcasts, orphans it may be, who have no kind father, no tender mother to watch over them; and willing, at least, to offer for a time, however short the time may be that you give, regularly of your prayers, for this great and blessed work.

Mr. Joseph Payne, in seconding the motion, said,—The Ragged School question has to-night been dealt with on every possible point; one has taken this, and another has taken that, and so on till at last there is nothing for me but to speak on another occasion *before* and not *after* these gentlemen. I have been laying in Lord Shaftesbury's magnificent speech, and have been laying in the speech of Dr. Miller, and the speech of my friend from over the Atlantic, and all the other speeches. And I must say of all their speeches that I have felt just as my mother when I was a boy used to tell me to feel whenever I had a meal, and that was to leave off with an appetite; and the speeches were all so nice that I have left off with an appetite. Dr. Smith spoke about some ragged children in America. I will just tell him who the children are that *our* Ragged School teachers have to deal with. Well, now, the children we have to deal with are—

> The clever and cute, the modest and mute,
> The ragged and rough, and the sturdy and tough.

Now, there are some of these boys will excite each other to do almost anything, and Lord Shaftesbury once said, that some one went into a Ragged School and saw the master lying upon the floor, and four great boys sitting astride of him and singing "Pop goes the Weasel." People say, with respect to Ragged Schools, that they don't believe half the things that are said of them, and those people remind me of a lawyer in this country. A man went to a lawyer and said, "Sir, they have put John Thomson in the stocks for such a thing." "I don't believe it," said the lawyer, "they can't do it." "But, sir," said the man, "they have done it." "I know," said the lawyer, "that they cannot put a man in the stocks for any such thing as that."

"But they *have* done it," said the man. "I don't believe it," said the lawyer. "Then come and see," said the man, and they went down and found the man in the stocks for the very thing that the lawyer said they could not put him there for. So with these people: they say you can't deal with these ragged and rough ones in the way you tell us, and we say to them, Come down and see for yourselves, and when they come they see these sturdy and rough ones quiet and docile; they see them clothed and in their right mind, and very often sitting at the feet of Jesus. (Applause.) I ought not to have spoken at all, but I have been fired up just to say a word or two. I am reminded of a room in a cottage in the West Indies, and there was a table in the middle of that room, and upon that table a Bible, and on one side stood a missionary, and on the other side stood a negro. He uttered this sentence, "Very good steel, very good flint, very good tinder," and the missionary said he didn't understand him. "What!" said he, "you no understand me"—me mean this: you, the missionary, are very good steel, that Bible you preach from is very good flint, and," laying his hand upon his heart, "and you together you strike out sparks and they fall upon the tinder of my heart, and they set it all on fire." (Applause.) Well, now about the Ragged School teachers; it strikes me they get on by four things—

By modest assurance, and patient endurance,
Loving their labours, nudging their neighbours.

They all get on by patient endurance. Now Dr. Davis, of the Religious Tract Society, had a predecessor, one William Jones, a tall portly man, very much respected because he very much respected himself. Well, he went to the Ragged School at Jurston-street, and a ragged boy was offended by something Mr. Jones said or did. The boy stooped down and butted Mr. Jones in the front part of him, and pitched him clean on his back. Mr. Jones got up again, and the boy expected he was going to be chastised, but Mr. Jones spoke kindly to him, and made the boy so ashamed of himself that he became the best boy in the school after that. Now, that was patient endurance, and that is the way to deal with them. Don't knock them about, but speak gently to them, and you turn the lion into the lamb. I will now read my tail-piece, No. 2,278, and it's called "Follow my Leader." You know I was away last year, and I was miserable ever afterwards:—

There's a time for all things which are under the sun,
There's a time to speak out, and a time to have done:
And to-night I confess, since the latter is o'er,
'Tis a "*time of refreshing*" to meet you once more!

I have rested awhile from book, platform, and speech,
And the strength which I sought for have managed to reach;
And now I've got back to the Ragged School plan,
I must *follow my leader* as hard as I can!

I cannot o'ertake him, so great are his powers,
So fit to instruct and enliven these hours;
But to pay for the past and make up for lost time,
I will *follow my leader* in prose and in rhyme!

And since he is worthy of honour from all,
The high and the humble, the great and the small;
The old and the young, my advice is to you,
To copy my practice, and follow him too.

What! *follow the Earl?* yes, but not in "the Lords,"
In which shorthand reporting his wisdom records;
But into the streets where his long arm will raise
The young from the gutter and mire of their ways.

Yes, follow him close, and you'll see him stoop low,
Far lower than thousands would venture to go;
And out of the gutter, and out of the mire,
Lift up the young children and bid them look higher.

And though about dresses we careless are found,
Yet when *dresses* show *doctrines* unsafe and unsound,
We will *follow my leader* to save the *truth's life*,
Even into the thick of the ritual strife!

And there we will hope that the bright shining beams
Of *Him* who those dresses *mock garments* esteems;
Our *Protestant eagle* with courage will fill,
To rend them and tear them to bits with his *Bill!*

That *Bill* is not *blunt*, and that *Bill* is not *long*,
But 'tis carefully sharpened and fearfully strong;
And we'll trust that no *weakness* the better may get
Of the zeal and good sense which have triumphed as yet.

Then let us advance, and in whatever way
The cause may require we will labour and pray:
And the young to instruct and the poor to befriend,
We will *follow our leader* right on to the end!

And when all our journeys on earth have been trod,
And we rise from the tomb; by the mercy of God
We will *follow our leader* through heaven's shining rows,
For he'll "*follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes!*"

After the hearty thanks of the large assembly, on the motion of the Rev. William Cadman, seconded by the Rev. J. H. Moran, had been given to the noble Chairman, the meeting closed with the Benediction.

Notice of Meeting.

SURREY ROW, S.

THE first public meeting in connection with this School, which was established some two years ago for the accommodation of the children resident in the extensive district surrounding Surrey-row, was held on Wednesday evening, 17th April last, in the Surrey Chapel school-room. Alderman Sir Robert W. Carden presided.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. J. Mortlock Brown, of Christchurch.

The Hon. Secretary read the report detailing the operations in connexion with the school during the past year, which, considering the short time that the School has been in existence, showed that with Sunday and Night Schools with 300 attendants, it was a great benefit to the neighbourhood. From the Treasurer's accounts it appeared that the total receipts for the year had amounted to £69 13s. 11d., and the expenditure to £68 8s. 10d., leaving a balance of £1 5s. 1d.

The Chairman said the report which had been read by the Secretary, differed from the reports of Ragged School anniversaries which he had of late been in the habit of attending, inasmuch as this was a new institution, having only been in existence for two years, so that a detail could not possibly be given as to any great results which as yet had flowed from it. Still he considered that the youthful character of the institution rendered it all the more interesting; for while they had great cause for rejoicing that there were already 200 Ragged Schools in the metropolis, having a daily attendance of 30,000 children, there was room and need for the establishment of 200 more, and they ought to rejoice at any addition that was made to the number. He therefore hailed with pleasure the establishment of this one; and he should hail with additional pleasure the establishment of 200 more, in order that 30,000 more children might be placed in them, for their own benefit and for the promotion of their best interests, and for the benefit and the interests of society at large. He had often thought that the public did not rightly appreciate the benefits conferred by these schools. He had recently attended the annual distribution of prizes to Ragged School children who had been in the same situation and maintained good characters for over twelve months, and he saw prizes given to 500 such children. Here, then, were 500 young people taken out of the gutter and placed in positions of respectability, where they could maintain themselves and keep their aged parents it might be, and that alone was certainly a great accomplishment. He therefore wished this addition to their Ragged Schools every success, and he had the greatest pleasure and satisfaction in presiding over the first public meeting in connexion with it.

The Report was adopted, and a resolution passed, requesting the Committee to open a free Day School.

Interesting addresses were delivered by the Revs. James Amos, W. Curling, V. Charlesworth, Robert Berry, Mr. Hytche, of the Ragged School Union, and Messrs. B. L. Moody, of Chicago, William Morley, and Godfrey Saunders.

Papers, Original and Selected.

YOUTHS' HOMES.

SOME of our Boys' Refuges have annexed a Lodging-house branch to their other agencies for the social reclamation of the youths under their charge. Prominent amongst these are Brook Street and Maida Hall, the latter of which accommodates eight former inmates for the small sum of one shilling per week. Valuable as are these Refuges, we know no branch of their operations which is more calculated to carry out the great object for which they were designed. For by this plan lads, formerly in the Refuge, but who are now in situations, obtain all the comforts of home, with all the benefits of Christian oversight; and thus the "missing link" between the Refuge and the world is supplied.

When Refuge inmates enter the labour market, it is most desirable, if the reformation is to be permanent, that they should be kept from the haunts from whence they emerged. For, either through the folly of relatives or the temptations of former bad associates, all the lessons of piety and industry acquired in the Refuge may be *un*-learnt, and thus their "last state will be worse than the first." Another reason which makes such a Home desirable is this: their earnings at first are so scanty that they cannot possibly pay anything like the rent which is demanded for a single room in London; three to four shillings per week not being an unusual sum demanded in some of the most miserable courts of this city.

If, then, we would prevent a financial break-down at the outset of life, the attaching a Lodging-house department to the Refuge is suggested. For unless this be done these poor lads will necessarily be tempted to resort to the low "Lodging-houses for Travellers" with which the Mint in Southwark, and the Devil's Acre in Westminster, abound. In those vile places a bed can be obtained for fourpence per night, or two shillings per week, and a "shake-down" on the floor for twopence. Of the moral evils incident to these lodging-houses, where tramps, and vagrants, and mendicants, and thieves just emerged from jail, indiscriminately sleep, there can be no need to enlarge. Suffice it to say that when both sexes and all ages are

permitted to herd together, more like swine than human beings, it would require a miracle to prevent moral and physical ruin. The *inside* life of such dens of infamy is well depicted in the letter of a youth who was dismissed from the Marylebone "Youths' Home" for frequent violation of its rules. He thus wrote to the Superintendent :—

"Sir,—You know not what pain it gives me to think of you enjoying your Sundays while I am in this miserable place. I am writing in the midst of swearing, and I see to my own sorrow the difference of being here and at the Home. If you will give me another trial I will take care not to abuse it. Think what it must be to me, after being at the Home, to go to such a place as ——— Street. I could not sleep on Saturday night for fear of losing my clothes. Sir, I dread the thought of stopping at ——— Street to-night. Do think of me kindly.

"Your obedient servant,

——— ———."

Yet even when adequate wages are paid, or board and lodging are provided, how often do poor lads obtain situations where family prayer is unknown, and the Bible is only used to record on its blank pages noticeable events in the family history. The master, it may be, so well cares for the bodily wants of those he employs as to be regarded as a model employer; but the wants of the soul are as ignored as if there were no God and no hereafter. Thus sadly writes a young man in a City house of business :—"Since the time that my home was broken up, five years ago, I have had many situations, but have not lived with one Christian ever since, or with one family who had family prayer."

It is from a knowledge of these evils that the managers of the Islington, Marylebone, Whitechapel, and other Shoe-black Societies, have added a Home to their other agencies. By many conversations with these industrious boys we *know* that these Homes are much appreciated by poor lads, many of them without a home, or whose parents are their bitterest foes.

So much, indeed, do we consider a Lodging-house branch as essential to a Refuge, that we cannot regard its machinery as complete where it is absent. We are well aware that many Boys' Refuges are too restricted in space to allow them to receive former inmates as lodgers. But if an adjacent house were rented by the managers it would serve every purpose. Oversight, of course, would be necessary; but if the Lodging-house were placed in charge of the Assistant-master at night, and the lodgers were allowed to take their meals in the Refuge, all the benefits of a Refuge-home would be provided.

We are glad to find that a step in this direction has been made for the benefit of a class somewhat above those who form the staple of our Refuges, but who have almost equal claims. This work, under the title of "Youths' Christian Association and Home," was commenced in 1860. At present it receives sixteen lads, from 13 to 18 years of age, who pay two shillings per week for their lodgings. Out of the £300, which is the average cost of this Home, the inmates contribute about one-third. In addition to the Home, there is a comfortable Reading-room, well supplied with magazines and books. At their own option they can board in the Home at the following rates, namely: breakfast 3d.; dinner, 6d.; tea, 3d.; and supper, 1d.

About 160 youths have availed themselves of this Home since its foundation. That they could not pay the heavy rent usually charged for bedrooms in London is implied by the fact that their earnings only average from eight to ten shillings per week. It is clear, then, that though as a class above that of Refuge inmates, they need cheap lodgings as much as our poor friends.

The following are the rules for the government of the Marylebone Home. To the observance of these rules they give a written pledge prior to admission, and infringement leads to exclusion.

1. Every resident to be down to breakfast, washed and dressed, by a quarter past seven o'clock; Sundays by eight o'clock.

2. Each resident is expected to be present, when practicable, at family worship, conducted every morning at quarter to eight o'clock (Sundays quarter to nine), and evening at ten o'clock.

3. No resident shall be allowed in bedrooms after nine o'clock on week-days, and after quarter-past eight on Sundays.

4. No visitors to be entertained in bedrooms.

5. Each resident to be provided with slippers, and on retiring to bed, to leave his boots on first-floor landing.

6. Each resident is to be home by ten o'clock, as the gas is turned off at eleven.

7. No resident on any account to occupy any other bed than the one allotted to him.

8. Residents are not allowed to clean boots on Sundays.

9. Smoking, bad language, and everything derogatory to the Christian character, strictly forbidden.

10. Books of an unhealthy tone will be detained by the Manager till the owner leaves the Home.

11. For the sake of other residents, any youth feeling himself ill must report himself to the Manager at once.

12. All breakages to be paid for by those breaking.

We are glad to find that though destitute lads are not usually received into this Home, yet there have been occasions when the rule has been relaxed. For example: the mother of a lad, respectably brought up, being reduced in circumstances, was com-

pelled to enter a metropolitan charity. Last year the following letter was received from the grateful mother :—

"I trust you will pardon my writing these few lines to you, to thank you most sincerely for your kindness to my son Henry. As a mother, and situated as I unfortunately am, I have not the opportunity of looking after his welfare and comforts as I should wish to do. Under these circumstances, I assure you, I am very grateful to my son, and who, I am sure, with myself, feels your goodness to him as sincerely as I do."

That much good, spiritual and temporal, has resulted from this Home, many facts testify. Urged publicly and by private converse to choose at once for Christ, many have become members of churches, and not a few are now acting as tract distributors and Ragged School teachers. Two more now labour among the heathen as agents of the London Missionary Society.

The following letter, one out of many received by the Managers, shows that the Holy Spirit has been present at the various meetings of this Home. The writer says :—

"Dear Friend,—If ever there was a soul that has need to thank God for the Youths' Christian Association, it is me; for before I became acquainted with your Association I was one of the vilest of the vile, sunken in all kinds of vice and wickedness that ever a soul could fall into; I cared neither for God nor man, nothing was too bad for me. For swearing and blasphemy I was often rebuked by those who were in the habit of swearing themselves, till the Spirit of God began to work in my heart, and I resolved to leave my old companions, and to obtain a situation near here, when I met one of the members, who invited me to your Association, where I was convinced of sin by the instrumentality of a kind friend, Mr. J. I went home, and for three days the Spirit of God strove with me, till at last, melted to tears by the love of God, my spirit gave way, and I found peace through believing, which peace I still enjoy. In course of time I was received as a member of our Association, where I have spent many happy hours in communion with Jesus. The Association has been to me the instrument in God's hands not only of my conversion, but an arm to support me through the deep waters of trial, and a friend in the hour of need. When relations and the world seemed to frown, then this Home and Association threw open its doors, and said, 'Come in, for you are one with us;' for which I shall ever be truly grateful, and will pray that it may prosper; that its walls may be extended, that its influence may be felt far and wide; that it may be the honoured birth-place of many souls.

"Yours, truly in Jesus, "A. I."

As most bright pictures have a background of gloom, so, amid this sunshine of spiritual prosperity, we are sorry to find that the institution is in debt about £200. This is the more to be regretted, because the Home is at present full. Sometimes the Superintendent has had to refuse four or five applications per week. As it is painful to have to turn them from their doors, with the answer, "*We have no more room,*" the Committee are prepared to provide enlarged premises, when the small sum of £300 is subscribed.

This sum, when compared with the good involved, is so trifling that we cannot but think that some wealthy Christian who properly regards himself only as a trustee for the Lord, will transmit it at once. Then will this Home be enabled to enlarge its borders, and so become a Bethel to many a youth now liable to be lured from virtue by the many temptations incident to a great city; and what is still better, many youths will find in this Home a faint shadow of the Eternal Home far away.

DOLLY SHOPS.

As the term "Dolly Shops" has often occurred in this and other magazines devoted to social reclamation, we are sometimes asked what this strange phrase means. Like most cant terms, it is not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary; but it is in common use among cadgers, mud-larks, thieves, and the other scum of our social system. The word and the meaning indeed is almost drank in with the mother's milk, so that there are few Ragged scholars who do not apprehend its meaning from many a wretched experience. Not rarely, when we have asked a child in a Ragged School, "Where is your new jacket?" the reply has been, "Mother took it to the 'Dolly Shop.'"

"Dolly Shops" then may be defined as *unlicensed* pawnbrokers, the only difference being that the regular pawnbroker professes only to lend money, whilst the Dolly Shop keeper professes to buy the articles deposited. Sometimes, but rarely, the articles are really bought, when not a third of their value is given. But usually they are only left for six weeks, when, if taken back, an exorbitant rate of interest is charged, not rarely from 40 to 50 per cent. Receiving articles from both sexes, from mere children as well as from adults, they are too often warehouses for stolen goods, to remain there until the articles can be safely removed. They thus tempt to juvenile delinquency even more than avowed receivers of stolen goods; for the last question the Dolly Shop keeper thinks of asking is, "Is it your own property?"

There are and have been for many years hundreds of "Dolly Shops" in the wretched byeways of London; and give a vile district, and a Dolly Shop is sure to form a prominent feature in the moral "darkness which may be felt." That, illegal as they are, they should be permitted to exist unwatched and uninterrupted by the police is a mystery which we cannot solve; for they are known to corrupt both young and old, and to be little else than repositories for stolen goods, even when they are not avowed receivers of stolen property. Over the licensed pawnbroker the public has some hold, but these illegal establishments are permitted to offer a ready road to ruin to both young and old, until the pilfering youth becomes the confirmed thief, and penal servitude ends his career. Had these shops been placed under police inspection, as would be warranted from the fact that, as unlicensed pawnbrokers, they are avowed law-breakers, these evils would have been checked at the very outset. It will be well for society when it remembers that when

it *winks* at Dolly Shops, and other receivers of stolen property, it shares in the crime; just as, in the form of lost moral wealth, and expensive prison discipline, it eventually shares in the penalty of such neglect.

The evils incident to this system need more to be referred to from the fact that the number of Dolly Shops is increasing. Many a tale of woe have we heard at our Mothers' Meetings, either in the shape of the usurious interest charged, or the way in which their children have been tempted to rob their own parents by the facilities presented by these harpies. In fact, it is not too much to say that very much of the poverty of the parents of our scholars, especially in what may be called the thieves' quarters, may be divided between the gin palace and the Dolly Shop. It is well then to know these facts, as such knowledge is half the cure.

But to show the evils involved in Dolly Shops, we extract the following particulars from the graphic "Three Gilt Balls" of Mr. T. Turner, who knows all the ins and outs of this vile system. Referring to the owners of Dolly Shops, he says that—

These gentry are well known to City missionaries and policemen, and are watched as carefully as a cat watches a mouse. Like their more respectable relations, they mount no sign, and are not distinguishable to the general public. Money-lending with these is on a very small scale; and is but the smallest portion of their business. Some do an extensive trade, and never lend any. It is pleasant to be charitable, especially when it costs nothing. But these defy the utterance of even a good word. He who would speak in their praise would deserve an action for slander. They live above law. The keenest Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot touch them. They have a license of their own, above law, which of course costs nothing. They nominally purchase every article brought to them, in reality, take all in pledge. They give no duplicate, and are not responsible for the return of anything. Still, self-interest, if no higher motive, generally keeps them to their bargain. As stated, they buy; and the seller may repurchase within a week or a fortnight, at a good profit, of course in lieu of interest. The injustice of the transaction is manifest, as their customers are too poor or too vicious to help themselves. If not redeemed at the specified time, any article may be sold; and the profit, much or little, is pocketed. These receptacles of anything and everything only exist in localities where destitution and vice abound. Sometimes they have the appearance of marine stores, or what they really are, old clothes shops. Sometimes they are coupled with a chandler's shop, and a profitable trade is driven, as the parties who leave their goods are compelled to take in return what is there sold—it may be poisonous table-beer, strengthened, flavoured, and coloured by some brewer's apron, or leaves ticketed as "strong Bohea," "Young Hyson," or "genuine Souchong," all of which may have done duty at the Carlton or Reform Clubs, or the last tea-drinking at your own Ragged School. They exist, too, in connection with some licensed beershops, where pewter pots and porter reign triumphant, and songs are roared from the mouth of some vagrant, or screamed by some wanton—where the fiddler plays the last polka, and shares with the landlord the profits of the twopenny hop. Yes, even there they exist; and I blush to state it, women, when all their money is gone, are known to slip off some article of dress, and hand it to the landlord as a security for the maddening beverage he calls porter. It is generally the thirst for drink which brings them customers; and they are ready to possess anything on which they can with safety advance the price of a pint of porter or half-a-quartern of gin.

The existence of these places in any locality is an unmitigated curse, as the facilities afforded for the disposal of almost worthless articles helps the drunkard to pander

to his appetite, robs the home of its most necessary articles—children of their food and clothing, while it contributes to the supply of paupers in all our metropolitan parishes. I could occupy the whole of your time with tales, some ludicrous, some appalling, illustrative of the evil influence of these pest houses. I give you two :—

A hard working man, who liked and deserved the good things of this life, found himself, after a week's toil, walking home with a fine leg of mutton and large loaf of bread. The bread was a usual thing; but there was the mutton, sufficient to cheer, and yet surprise any wife. No cag-mag, but cut from a genuine Southdown.

"Wife," says the husband, "that will make us a good Sunday dinner, boiled with caper sauce."

"Boiled!" says the wife.

"Yes, dear; a leg of mutton is always best boiled."

Now that word *boiled* was terrible in its influence, because it would require a large kettle, and that was at the Dolly Shop—unknown, of course, by the loving husband. Happily, if the husband *had* love, the wife had genius. Off went the wife, Sunday morning, with the loaf to redeem the kettle—accomplished her purpose—boiled the mutton—redeemed the loaf by again pledging the kettle, and then sat down to eat her dinner, praise the quality of the mutton, and be praised in return for her skill in cooking it. I make bold to tell husbands this tale need not alarm them, as the doings of this wife and woman are quite an exception to the rule. So is the following—

It is no doubt well known to most that our Poor Law contemplates condition, not character. In other words, the vile and lazy can claim and have as much legal right to shelter, food, and clothing, as the most moral and industrious. They can enter the union or workhouse just when they like, and leave when they like. That is the law; and master, matron, or guardian have no power to alter it. The unworthy know this, and of course take advantage of it. Possessing this knowledge, the heroine of our story often claimed her rights to admission and discharge. In filth and wretchedness she always came; in decent, if not fashionable, attire she always left. No remonstrance was heeded, no punishment effectual to secure a reform. Every time she left, her clothing was disposed of, and how to prevent it baffled master, doctor, clerk, guardians, and all others concerned, save the matron. Who knows the depth of a woman's skill? Commend me to two women, whose pursuits are antagonistic, for a display of ability. When genius is opposed to genius they develop each other—act and react. This was seen in the matron and her persevering friend.

"Please, ma'am," said the woman to the matron, "I want to leave."

The matron knew it was gin she wanted, but very good temperedly replied, "You can leave to-morrow," determined at the same time no *gin* should be had at the expense of the parish.

Thus resolved, she contrived a dress from old counterpanes, cut and made in a style far above the fashion of the day. On the morrow our friend was ready for her liberty; so was the matron with her dress. Proud of her achievement and secure of a triumph, coolly the robe was put on, and away she went. I am sorry to add, her desire of liberty was but brief, as in a few days she claimed her right for shelter, and in triumph informed the matron the dress was at the Dolly Shop, and may be obtained by paying principal and interest.

This is no fiction. I have an authority for asserting it as a fact—terrible, if for a moment amusing. You who happily live and move in a circle far removed from the lower strata of society, can afford to think your ignorance is bliss, and perhaps, in some respects, it is. Still, it would not do for all to discard these things. If humanity does sink so low, let me know it, aye, and witness it too. I say they are still akin to us. Our hearts will not be less grateful for knowing something of the pit in which so many have fallen, or for the power which in mercy restrains us from it.

I have seen some as low as this wretched woman—have made inquiries into their early history, and now say with confidence, they are not limited to any class—their ranks are filled from every grade. Some have been nursed in comfort—trained with care—lived in the enjoyment of every luxury the heart could desire, and owe their degradation to a false step—to disappointed hopes—to cunning schemers—to the formation of habits which not only admit, but compel a downward tendency, until the last stage is reached, when destitute of shame, they seem to possess only the power to resist every effort to elevate and bring back to a position of comfort and respect. Oh! it is, alas! too true!—human nature can educate itself for the vilest life—for the deepest woe, and live glorying in it.

NEAPOLITAN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE two worst educated countries in Europe are Spain and Italy. Nominally ruled by kings, they were really governed by priests, who, thinking that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," regarded education as their bitterest enemy! Hence, if they had not kept back the Bible from the laity there were few among the poorer classes who could have read the holy book. It is not then surprising that, with a population in United Italy of nearly 25,000,000, it is estimated that above 17,000,000 can neither read nor write. Strenuous efforts, however, are being made by the present Government to open Schools throughout the land, in spite of priest and monk, and before long it may be hoped that the poorest will be able to read their great national poet, Dante, and, like him, learn that Christ's religion and the Papacy can never become allies.

But some time before the Government thus interfered, and soon after Naples was liberated from the rule of a bad and bigoted king, some Christian men and women opened a Ragged School in the Via Cavone. It was staunchly supported by the illustrious liberator, Garibaldi, and under his auspices it speedily became popular with the lazzaroni. The school-room was soon found far too small for the applicants for admission; and the scene outside was very similar to what we have witnessed at a London Ragged School on Sunday nights, when crowds have been kept out for want of teachers.

As may be supposed, the Romish priesthood did not like this invasion of their territory; and by means of the confessional they sought to deter the mothers from allowing their children to attend the Poor Schools. Sometimes, too, the priests stirred up the "roughs" of Naples to throw stones at, or to strike the teachers, or to break the School windows. But the evangelicals, undeterred by this, went on with their work among the outcast and the destitute, until at length the priests thought it the wisest course to ignore the work, as molestation only raised up friends to the cause, who, if they did not care much for the Gospel, at least cared for the right of conscience. Thus the first part of the battle, through the help of the Almighty, was won; and the four Poor Schools now opened by the evangelists are so thronged, that more will be established when funds will permit.

Not only have children been benefited by these Schools, but, as in the kindred institutions in England, even the secular is leavened with Gospel truth. By this means many poor Italian peasants have heard for the first time that it is not the Madonna, but Jesus, that saves, who, without these

Poor Schools, would never have learnt that elementary truth. Already abundant fruit has sprung up from this patient Gospel seed-sowing on Italian soil. For wherever was Christ held up to the outcast or the destitute in all his fulness without a rich crop being garnered?

One striking instance of fruitage may be mentioned. A Christian friend was recently passing along a leading street, when he was surprised to see, written in a good hand upon the dust, the text, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." A little further on he read, "Bless them that curse you," and not far off, "Set your whole affection upon study; but remember that the chief wisdom is the fear of God." While considering this pleasing sight, another Christian friend came up, who had been equally interested, and had sought out the writer, and found him in the act. The two went to seek him out; and who was he? A very poor boy, of nine years old, ragged and patched, but neat, who, when asked how he had learned to write such good things, answered, "At the Evangelical School in Via Cavone." While conversing with the boy, sundry persons came up and read the inscriptions. Three ladies laughed at "The wages of sin," but grew serious over the rest of the sentence; and much the same happened with others. One old gentleman exclaimed, "Whoever has written these interesting maxims?" The boy, without hesitation, went up to him and said he had done it. The gentleman asked his name, and what school he went to. "I am Giovanni Pallola," said he, "and I go to the Evangelical School in the Via Cavone." "To the Evangelical School!" said the stranger with amazement—an amazement shared by the now numerous bystanders—and then, giving the lad two francs and his address, told him to come and see him the next day. It appears that when the boy, accompanied by his father, a poor working man, went to the old gentleman, the latter proposed that he should be sent to a college at his expense. The father thanked him for the kind offer, but declined to take away his son from a School where he received the best of instruction. All kinds of arguments were used with the poor man, but in vain, and the boy retains his place in the "Evangelical School in the Via Cavone."

The four Evangelical Schools in Naples are, we are glad to say, upheld by Christians of various denominations, and the teaching in them is based solely upon Holy Scripture. The teachers in the Schools are chiefly Waldenses or converted priests. Our prayer is that such Schools for the poor may multiply until every child in free Italy learns the truth that its liberties cannot be consolidated apart from the freedom which is in Jesus.

AMERICAN MISSION SCHOOLS.

At a conference of teachers and delegates from Friends' First-day Schools, held at New York, some interesting information was given by various speakers as to an Association called the "Bethel," designed to provide for the temporal and spiritual welfare of rivermen and their families, and all others who may be unreached by regular church organizations. It also seeks to gather in and furnish religious instruction and temporal aid to the poor

and neglected children of that city and vicinity, and to make provision for their social elevation by providing them homes and employments. It is, in fact, a Ragged School without the name, which is obnoxious to our American brethren.

One of the principal features of this good work is the Bethel Sunday School, which is probably the largest School of the kind in the world. It is composed exclusively of poor children gathered in from families having no connection with the regular churches. The attendance is truly gigantic, for 2,500 children attended the School during the past year, for periods of not less than six weeks, with an attendance reaching as high as 1,960 scholars on a single Sunday afternoon, and an average, during the cooler months of the year, of fully 1,500, and for the entire year of 1,173. These children are clothed and fed, as well as religiously educated. Their advancement in very many cases is reported as truly wonderful, and through their instrumentality there is found an open door to the families and hearts of a large portion of the poorer class of the community.

Each child receives a ticket for punctual attendance and good behaviour, and these tickets are redeemed by clothes or books, as needed; sixteen tickets being sufficient for a garment. The teachers are not connected in any way with this distribution, except that they give out the tickets. If, in the operation of the plan, the scholar is disappointed, he cannot blame his teacher or the Superintendent, for a person is specially employed, who visits them at their houses, and learns the circumstances of their different families, and can therefore apply such relief as is required for each. This plan has been found to work very well, for nothing encourages beggary so much as indiscriminate giving. It is important to strengthen their feeling of self-respect, and in time it may be very much promoted in this way. We can scarcely understand what a pair of shoes is to a boy who has gone through the cold streets, many a day, bare-footed. This benefit not only reaches the scholars, but it goes with them to their homes. The influence which a well-dressed child exerts among them is very great. They work harder to get these garments for themselves, and anything which stimulates their self-respect tends to elevate their condition. This, however, is not the principal aim. The *main* purpose of the School is to teach the truths of the Gospel, to bring these little ones, as did the disciples of old, to the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may bless them: and in order to do this, we must use plain words and make direct and *personal* appeals. They must be met with the greatest simplicity. In the Mission School, staying only a short time, they come and go, in many cases, with great irregularity. As they do not understand many of our forms of expression, we must be plain, practical, and strike often and hard.

Amongst the most earnest workers is Elizabeth L. Comstock, who, in giving her experience, related the following striking instance of "fruit found after many days."

"It is about twenty-two years since I was engaged as teacher, in a large Friends' School at Ackworth, in England, where a boy among the pupils drew the attention of the teachers, who remarked that he was bright and promising. He interested me exceedingly, and I felt deeply solicitous for his future welfare. Years passed away, and in the change of residence I

lost sight of him. During those years, I often thought of the example of Elizabeth Fry, in her labours for the ignorant and degraded, and prayers were often raised in my heart that I too, in gratitude for all that had been wrought for me, might do something for my Lord. I prayed for ability to comfort the suffering, to return the wanderer, to support the mourner, and to soothe the afflicted.

"At a meeting of this Conference in Cincinnati, some time since, I again met that boy, now grown to be a strong man, and I listened to him as he spoke of the Mission Schools of Cincinnati, and the degraded condition in which so many of the poor were plunged. He spoke of the relations of the Church to the world, and appealed earnestly to ministers in our Society to consider the claims of the poor, the outcast, and the afflicted. I listened attentively to this appeal, and was deeply affected. That night sleep left me; during the long, restless hours, prayer and supplication were my engagement. I queried with myself, Why has it been, that the seed sown in earlier life has borne so little fruit? I loved my own religious society,—I had laboured in it, but I now became convinced that I had moved too much, as it were, in a groove. The result of those hours of proving was, that I covenanted afresh with my Lord and Master, that if he would be with me, if he would open the hearts of these people to receive me, and would keep me in my going out and coming in among them, I would labour with them in the ability thus afforded. I inquired for the young man whom I had heard, and found that he was Superintendent of a School, into which more than a thousand of the ragged and destitute children of that city were gathered. I visited the School. The teacher of the day was the Ackworth boy of years gone by, and, as I looked upon the upturned faces of the children, and listened to the beautiful hymn which came sweetly on the air,—'Who shall sing if not the children?' I felt that this was indeed a blessed work. There are other large Schools of similar character, where hundreds, and thousands of ragged or abandoned childen are gathered—children who go to no other school, nor to a place of worship; and I am convinced that no doubting one can visit such a School without reading the same lesson that I did,—a lesson of faith in the efficacy of the great Gospel plan of salvation, as applicable to every rank and condition."

HOW LOVE REFORMED A JUVENILE THIEF.

It was a dull day, in the end of September; the dark clouds seemed to touch the tops of the hills, and sudden gusts of wind and snow swept furiously the bare surface of the country. At the door of a farm-house in Scotland, far away in the moors, was a woman of middle age, clean and strong-looking, and who was gazing compassionately on a poor boy standing before her.

"O, let me stay, ma'am!" he said to her; "let me stay. I will do everything you wish; split wood, draw water, and do your errands."

His eyes were filled with tears, and seemed to implore pity from her who listened to him. But the good woman was little disposed to grant the request. His torn and dirty clothes were a poor shelter from the wind which swelled his limbs and made his skin red; he was so trembling with

cold, and seemed ill with fatigue and hunger, that it was pitiable to see him. But upon his countenance there was such an expression of wickedness and vice, that the farmer's wife, in spite of her good nature, still hesitated. At last her compassion overcame her. "Come in, at any rate, until my husband returns. There, sit by the fire, and warm yourself."

Saying these words, she shut the door and made him sit down on a great bench at the corner of the hearth; then, casting upon him from time to time a look of suspicion, she proceeded to get supper ready.

Soon footsteps were heard in the yard, the door opened, and the master of the house entered. He at once scanned the figure of the beggar, and he also did not appear too well satisfied; however, he made him come to table, and was somewhat amused to see how quickly the boy caused the simple but substantial food placed before him to disappear. The next day he was put to work, and showed himself desirous to recompense his benefactors by his diligence and good conduct. So he remained.

Several weeks had passed, and our friends were living together in harmony, when one day a pedler, who for a long time had done business at the farm, came on his usual round.

While they were bargaining, he said, "I see you have a boy," and pointed with his finger to the yard where Jack (as we will call our outcast) was splitting wood.

"Do you know him?"

"I have seen him before," said the pedler.

"And where have you seen him? Who is he?"

"A thief!" said the pedler, throwing his pack over his shoulder. "That boy I saw at the bar, and heard his sentence—'Ten months' imprisonment!'"

And so he went on his way, looking furtively at poor Jack, who was working on without knowing what had passed.

The good woman began to reflect—that is a terrible word, *prison*, and it is little credit to have a servant who deserves the name of thief. So she thought; then called Jack and told him what she knew of his history. How he suffered during this interview! He hung his head, confused and unhappy; the blood mounted to his cheeks, and anguish seemed depicted on his countenance.

"Very well!" said he, at last, with a sigh of despair; "very well! I will do all I can to go wrong at once. It is no use trying to be better. Everybody hates me! No one tries to do me good; I will do all I can to go wrong!"

"Tell me," said the woman to him, "how one so young as you came to be put in prison? Where was your mother then?"

"I have no mother! Oh, if I had had one, they would not have placed me as apprentice with a wicked man, who beat me and tormented me; and I should not have run away, nor stolen in order to live! I have no mother!" While saying these words, he threw himself on his knees, half-choked by his sobs, and with both his hands wiped his eyes red with tears.

What was the good woman thinking of all this time? Was she thinking of the best way to get rid of him? Some would, perhaps, in her place, have done so. They would have said, "This boy is so wicked, he has been with such bad companions, and has learnt such wicked things, he cannot be kept in a respectable house." But the good Scotchwoman thought otherwise.

She had read in her Bible these words: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" she had learnt from a compassionate Jesus to hate the sin, indeed, but to love the sinner; and she knew that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." It was clear what she must do. She bent down to poor Jack, and, putting her arms round his neck, said to him, "Poor boy! I will be your mother." And then tenderly and sweetly, like a mother, she wiped his tears, and consoled him as well as the could. But, above all, she began to tell him of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost. From this moment Jack was a new being; he worked with fresh zeal, and became more and more attached to his benefactors.

His adopted father is dead, and the good wife is now old and infirm; but Jack has not abandoned her. He is become a young man, honest, frank, and respectable. By his labour he supports her who first loved him and spoke to him kindly, although she knew his sad history.

Reader, you, perhaps, know some who, like Jack, are fallen very low, but who, like him, seek to make their past life forgotten by a regular and honest course of conduct. Oh, do not discourage them; forget what they have been; only see what they are! Seek to bring them to the Saviour, who alone is able to pardon their past life, and give them the power and grace to do better. Always remember that "He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—*Le Magasin Méthodiste.*

A COLUMN OF SOCIAL STATISTICS.

1.—CONSUMPTION OF INTOXICANTS.

ENGLAND is regarded by other nations as the most drunken nation in the world. That, with all the spread of education, it is not likely as yet to lose its evil reputation, the following statistics referring to the consumption of alcoholic liquors too sadly indicate. By these returns it appears that the consumption of wine and spirits increased last year. 11,933,760 gallons of foreign and colonial wine were retained for consumption, averaging 0·40 gallon per head, and 11d. per head to the revenue. Foreign and colonial spirits 6,732,217 gallons, averaging 0·23 gallon per head, and 2s. 4d. per head to the revenue. Home-made spirits 20,711,155 gallons, averaging 0·695 gallon per head, and 6s. 11¾d. per head to the revenue. On tea, coffee, and sugar, the year's taxation amounted on an average to 5s. 10½d. per head of the population; on spirits, wine, and malt, 14s. 5½d.; on tobacco, 4s. 2d.

2.—DRUNKENNESS.

In the year ending Michaelmas last 94,908 persons—260 a day—were proceeded against before justices in England for drunkenness, or for being drunk and disorderly, and 63,255 of them were convicted. The great majority were only fined, but above 7,000 were committed to prison. In London alone no less than 19,055 were captured by the police for disorderly drunkenness; and a large proportion of these were fined. The returns show a great increase

over the previous year, for only 82,196 were then charged with drunkenness, and only 54,123 convicted. Of the persons thus charged in the last year 22,560 were *females*, and more than 10,000 women were convicted for being drunk.

Coroners' inquests in the year 1862 found 211 verdicts of death from excessive drinking; 145 men and 66 women thus ending their days by what can only be regarded as self-murder.

3.—PAUPERISM.

From a Parliamentary paper issued by the Poor Law Board a few days ago, it appears there are at present 14,886 parishes in England and Wales maintaining, or liable to maintain their own poor. Returns of pauperism are received weekly in respect to 14,695 of that number. 191 parishes, incorporated under Gilbert's Act, or still under the provisions of the 42nd Elizabeth, make no return of the number of paupers they relieve.

The number of paupers relieved in England and Wales in the fourth week of May, 1866, was—In-door, 121,045; out-door, 727,888: total, 848,873.

Not a few of these are *hereditary* paupers. As such they are brought up to live on the parish from earliest youth, as if they had a natural right to be thus supported by the public; and in turn they will bring up their offspring to succeed to their inheritance as in-door or out-door paupers. They would rather starve than work; but, by hereditary cunning, or by lessons daily taught by their parents, they contrive to do neither. Take away these hereditary pauper families, and these frightful figures would soon materially diminish. For the real poor form only a small minority of pauperdom; and resorting to the parish only in extremity, they quit the rank of paupers as soon as they possibly can.

4.—CRIME.

The number of persons taken into custody during the year 1866 by the metropolitan police was 70,224. Among the charges were 8,662 for common assaults, 2,883 for assaults on the police, 2,409 for larceny from the person, 9,130 for simple larceny, 3,121 for unlawful possession of goods. As many as 4,971 persons were taken into custody as vagrants. Of the 70,224 persons taken into custody, 31,103 were discharged by the magistrates, and 35,164 either summarily convicted or held to bail, while 3,957 were committed for trial. Of these, 3,091 were convicted and sentenced, 702 acquitted, and in 164 cases either bills were not found or no prosecution took place.

With regard to the instruction of the persons taken into custody, 89 had received a superior education, 2,299 could read and write well, 57,045 could read only, or read and write imperfectly, and 10,791 could neither read nor write.

Of the total number, 47,421 were males and 22,803 females; 362 had been convicted twice, 55 three times, 11 four times, and 2 five times and upwards.

The number of felonies within the metropolitan police district affecting property amounted to 16,077, for which 2,187 persons were tried and convicted. These felonies involved a first loss of £71,229, but of this sum £13,688 was recovered, leaving a total loss of £57,541.

The bulk of British crime is against property rather than against person.

But even in this respect, murder or manslaughter presents a fearful item in the annals of crime.

Thus in 1865-6 there were 54 attempts to murder, 32 of which were reported by the county constabulary, 5 by the metropolitan, and 17 by the borough police. In the preceding year the number of attempts to murder was 46, of which 30 were reported by the county constabulary; 15 were in different boroughs, and 1 in the city of London. The cases of manslaughter were 279, showing an increase of 65, or 30·3 per cent., as compared with the number in the preceding year. Of these 123, or 44·1 per cent., were reported by the county constabulary; 95, or 34·1 per cent., were in cities, boroughs, &c.; 57, or 24·4 per cent., in the metropolitan police district; and 4, or 1·4 per cent., in the city of London. In the preceding year, of 241 cases, 101, or 41·9 per cent., were in the counties; 88, or 36·5 per cent., were in cities, boroughs, &c.; 49, or 20·3 per cent., in the metropolitan police district; and 3, or 1·3 per cent., in the city of London.

The Poet's Corner.

UNFINISHED WORK.

O, DOST Thou call for me!
Master, it is the middle of the day!
I hoped to spend the latest twilight ray
In happy toil for Thee.

I long to labour on,—
Patient to bear the burden and the heat,
And find the evening shadows cool and sweet
When all my work is done.

Then, hear Thy welcome word,
"Come, faithful servant, to thy promised rest!"
My work "well done," the harvest richly blest,
How perfect the reward.

This for the tried and true,
But, Master, how am I for glory meet?
The work is yet unfinished at my feet
Thou gavest me to do.

How little fruit appears!
Yet I have ever loved to do Thy will—
The precious seed to sow, the soil to till,
And moisten with my tears.

Weary am I so soon?
O no, my spirit still is strong and fresh;
Dear Lord, it is the weakness of the flesh
That fainteth in the noon.

My harvest who shall reap?
"Peace, doubting soul, and cast on Me thy care,
Trusting the hand that placed the vineyard there
That vineyard still to keep.

I know thy tireless zeal,
How thou hast wrought in sunshine and in rain,
And heeded not the weariness and pain
For love that thou didst feel.

And thy reward is sure;
In heaven's own light the seed in weakness sown,
Thine eyes shall see to plenteous harvests grown;
And canst thou ask for more?

What mortal's work is done?
What servant shall be even as his Lord?
'Tis finished,' was a dying cry *once* heard;
It rose to heaven—*alone!*

O faithful unto death!
A crown of life is ready for the brow,
And joys thou hast no power to picture now
Await thy passing breath."

My Saviour! break the chain!
Amazing love, that sets my spirit free,
And makes my broken life complete in Thee!
Come quickly, Lord! Amen.

LINES WRITTEN IN A PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUM OF RAGGED SCHOOL WORKERS.

In this Sun-painted tome are friends enshrined
Of varying ranks and gifts, yet all combined
To heal the social-halt, or moral blind,
And ope the gates of heaven to Outcasts of mankind!

The Teachers' Column.

THE DIGNITY OF TEACHING.

The man who despises his work is seldom successful. If we mean to do well, the importance and value of the thing to be done should be borne in mind. Many a thing too, that, when regarded by itself, does not appear either valuable or important, may prove to be both the one and the other, when considered as a means to an end. In elaborating important machinery, what care is given to every minute detail! No part, however small, is counted insignificant; and in the pursuit of a great moral purpose everything is important which may con-

duce to the attainment of the end. For example, it is a tedious thing to teach a dull or careless child to read; but if he does not learn to do that, he must be ignorant, and the Word of God itself will be almost a sealed book to him: or, even if he learns to read, and is not correctly taught the meaning of the stops, what he reads is confused and unintelligible to him. Teaching, down to its smallest detail, has dignity.

Now the perception of this, and the bearing this in mind, when the difficulties of teaching have to be encountered, may help the teacher to be patient and resolute. Men engaged in other pursuits take pride in their profession, and cherish their sense of its importance; each can tell you how necessary his particular pursuit is to the safety, comfort, or happiness of mankind; each can point you to distinguished men whose skill added to the value and power of their profession, and whose success rewarded their devoted perseverance. The great and honourable names of such men are felt to give dignity to their calling.

It is indeed noble to give information, to open the avenues of knowledge, to exercise and develop powers that may one day become mighty, to lay the foundations of future usefulness; all this is dignified work, though some of its details may be very petty and wearisome. Many teachers have carefully cherished this feeling, and with the happiest results, both to themselves and to their charge. It is said of one schoolmaster in Germany, that he always made a low bow to his scholars on coming among them; and, when questioned as to the reason, he replied, "I do not regard them merely as little boys, I regard them as the future burgomasters of my city."

Sunday School teachers do not receive professional training, but there is no reason why they should not be good teachers;—men and women who can interest and instruct their charge, as well as hear certain lessons, and keep order in the class. Teaching is *feeding the mind*, and they are the best teachers who can give to children's minds the most pleasant, wholesome, and nourishing food. The dry routine of mere lesson-learning (especially under an impatient teacher) gives the little minds hard, scanty, ill-prepared, indigestible food; they may manage to eat it, but will scarcely thrive upon it. Nothing, then, that concerns teaching is unworthy of consideration; no part of this work should be carelessly done, or lightly esteemed; and a due appreciation of its dignity conduces to this end.

Three considerations give special importance and dignity to Sunday School teaching:—1. The nature of the MATERIAL worked upon. It is *mind*, not matter; not the snowy, virgin marble from which the sculptor may bring some form of matchless beauty, that must yet remain for ever cold and lifeless; but, mind, young mind, plastic now, rigid by-and-bye, "wax to receive, and marble to retain;" mind, that may bear an impress of heavenly beauty, that may become "the image of the invisible God." Mind, and not matter; not the costly stone which the lapidary cuts with such pains and patience, thinking no care and no labour too great, if only he may bring out its hidden lustre; but a gem of far greater price, which may shine bright with the beauty of holiness, which may adorn the Redeemer's crown. It is costly and precious material that the Sunday School teacher works upon.

2. The nature of the INSTRUMENT employed. The influences exerted are sacred, the truths taught are divine and eternal. The aim of the teacher is to imbue the mind of his scholars with noble and elevating truth, to help them to become "wise unto salvation." There are no truths so pure, so lofty, so powerful as those to which he endeavours to introduce them. When Lois and Eunice taught the young Timothy "from a child" to know the Holy Scriptures, they opened to him the fountain of life, they prepared him for permanent usefulness in the church at Ephesus, and for companionship in apostolic labour. Their

service, though in one sense humble, was yet hallowed and lofty; its results were glorious and abiding.

3. The whole work, rightly regarded, is CHRIST'S SERVICE. This may pervade all, elevate all, sanctify all. The *motive*, love to Christ, and to souls redeemed by his blood; the *aim*, to bring children to him, obeying his gracious command, and thus to make them blessings to their generation; the *reward*, success even here on earth, achieved in his strength, and scrupulously ascribed to him; and their rest and blessedness in his eternal joy. All Christ's service is noble; no part of it must be slighted; for in it all men may do his will and receive his blessing. — *Abridged from "Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine."*

The Editor's Note-book.

LITTLE CHILDREN.

THE Rev. Thomas Binney says of little children:—"I am fond of children. I think them the poetry of the world, the fresh flowers of our hearts and homes; little conjurors, with their 'natural magic,' evoking by their spells what delights and enriches all ranks, and equalizes the different classes of society. Often as they bring with them anxieties and cares, and live to occasion sorrow and grief, we should get along very badly without them. Only think if there never were anything anywhere but grown-up men and women, how we should long for the sight of a little child! Every infant comes into the world like a delighted prophet, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and to draw 'the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.'

"A child softens and purifies the heart, warming and melting it by its gentle presence; it enriches the soul by new feelings, and awakens within it what is favourable to virtue. It is a beam of light, a fountain of love, a teacher whose lessons few can resist. Infants recall us from much that endangers and encourages selfishness, that freezes the affections, roughens the manners, indurates the heart; they brighten the home, deepen love, invigorate exertion, infuse courage, and vivify and sustain the charities of life. It would be a miserable world, I do think, if it was not embellished by little children."

FAULTS OF CHILDREN.

MANY of the faults of children are only the rude forms of excellences that are not yet ripened. I should be very sorry to have a man judge of my pears by tasting them now in July. I should hate to have a man judge of my grapes by tasting them; nay, they are sour enough. But a great many parents taste their children's qualities when they are children; and, because they do not taste good, they are very much alarmed. There are many things to be done before a man is ripened. There is much juice to be changed and elaborated in the child before it can be brought to its normal condition. Did you ever observe in the spring how ferns grow up? A little silk ball protrudes from the ground, formless; and no man ever would suspect that from that small, rolled-up button, there was to be the opening out of broad fans and all that most exquisite and delicate tracery of the fern-palm.

Now there are no such graces as those which come rolled up in the child's disposition. At the first appearance of some undeveloped traits the parent says, "What is that?" Wait awhile, and it

will unroll; and you will see what it is. For example, many persons are much alarmed at a child's anger; but if they knew what it was, when the servant provoked the child, that called forth such a manifestation, they would see that that which they were pained to behold was an admirable and beneficent quality. The child did not know what it was, and the parent did not; but it was an honest revulsion from that which was essentially mean. The child was angry; but there was something to make it angry. It revolted against an unjust and oppressive act. The feeling which it displayed passed for anger. It was indignation; and indignation is noble. It is the opposition of the spirit to that which is bad. It is the first unconscious, unregulated, and uninterpreted fulfilment of the Divine command, "Abhor that which is evil."

HOW TO TRAIN CHILDREN.

WHAT you wish children to be they will be if you take pains to make them so. But if a child is eager and impatient for everything he sees, and it is constantly given to him, you must expect that he will never bear to be denied. If you permit him to refuse to give anything he is asked for, you must expect him to be selfish and illiberal. If you suffer him to strike or ill-treat those who are younger with impunity, you must not wonder if he becomes proud and cruel. If you never teach a child to be gentle and affectionate, you must expect him to be coarse and cruel. If you supply all his wants, and never leave him to do anything for himself, he will neither be active nor healthy; but if you use him to manly exercises, he will be strong and vigorous; and if you teach him forbearance, he will bear fatigue and difficulty.

Our involuntary impressions being much more easily acquired than those we received by the exertion of the will, example is generally found to be stronger than precept. It is of infinite importance, therefore, that we never expect from children that which we do not do ourselves, and that all we enjoin or forbid be strengthened by the lawful authority of our own example.

The Children's Gallery.

THE LITTLE PEDLER.

JENNY ALLEN and her sister were in the kitchen preparing their evening meal, when a loud ring was heard at the door. Susie answered it, and in a few minutes returned to the kitchen, followed by a little girl of ten or twelve years of age.

"Jenny," said her sister, "this little girl wanted to sell some of her things. I heard you say to-day you needed some thread, needles, &c., and so I brought her in."

"I have other things besides thread and needles," said the girl, pulling out a pair of stockings. "These are nice stockings; wouldn't you like to buy some?"

Jenny examined them, and found that they would be the very thing for her mother during the winter. She purchased several pairs of them, besides other little things. The child's eyes fairly beamed with happiness. Jenny noticed it, and asked,—

"What will you do with your money?"

"If we didn't have money we would have to starve, and we couldn't have any clothes, or get the doctor when we were sick."

"Your mother does all that with money, but what do you want with yours? Is it to buy cakes and candles and toys?"

"No, ma'am," she said, gravely shak-

ing her head, "I don't buy those. Papa is poor, and we want other things. I have been saving my money for something, and I have almost enough now. But won't Amy wonder when she sees the new things!"

"Who is Amy?"

"Amy? Why, she's my little sister, and I am keeping my money to buy some new things for her. She has to stay at home because she has no bonnet nor nice shoes, but she will have them soon. Then she can go out, and I will take her to Sabbath School."

"You go to Sabbath School, then. Do you like it?"

"Yes, indeed I do. They do sing such pretty hymns, and I have such a nice lady to teach me. She gave me a little red Testament, and I read it to Amy, and I try to teach her to sing. She wants to hear all the children, though. But I must go."

So she took up her basket and started off, the girl telling her to call again. She went her way with a happy heart and a smiling face.

Children, do you not think that little child's home must have been a happy one, when she loved her little sister so much as to save her money to spend for her? Don't you think you might make others happy by being kind as she was? "Little children, love one another."

HOW A SHILLING BECAME FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS.

A MAN entered the Rufford's Buildings Penny Bank about nine years ago. Previous to that, through his own misconduct, he had lost his work. But he had again got employment, and *now* determined to do better for the future. He said to himself, "I shall lay by a little every week. If I make £1, I can save 1s. out of it if I give up drinking." With his first savings he bought a Family Bible, then a "Pilgrim's Progress," then insured his life. He began to attend the little service, then a regular place of worship, and became a Sunday School teacher. It is some two years since he withdrew his deposits, and was lost sight of, as he had removed to another part of London.

Some time ago the Master's wife was standing at the door, when a pony and trap drew up, and a gentleman jumped out, and said he could not pass by without coming in to inquire about an institution which had been of such temporal and spiritual benefit to him. The first deposit he made was the first step towards his salvation. Previous to that, he, his wife, and children, were reduced to the very lowest extremity. But now, through continuing the line of conduct he set out with, he had accumulated, one way and another, over £500.

Nor is this the only instance of good done by the Penny Bank. More than one ragged boy has paid the rent from his savings when his father was out of work in winter. And out of 56 depositors in one Penny Bank 50 gave the following reasons for taking out their savings:—20 to buy clothing; 8 out of work; 7 illness; 6 death in family; 3 stock in trade; 3 removing; 1 to buy a bedstead; 1 to bind books; 1 to buy coals. So you see that they not only saved well, but spent their savings properly. And who can tell the lessons of prudence they learnt for their lives?

A SERVANT WHO DIED FOR HIS MASTER.

ONE winter many years ago, while a nobleman and his wife were travelling in Russia, a number of wolves tried to overtake their carriage. The servant seeing the wolves get nearer and nearer, begged his master to allow him to leave them the horse on which he was riding, and he would get up behind. This was done, and while the hungry wolves were tearing the poor horse to pieces, the travellers made every effort to reach the next town, to which they were near. The wolves having tasted blood became more savage, and were again getting near the carriage. The servant cried out, "Master! there

is only one way by which you and the lady may be saved; I will get down and meet the wolves. Look to my wife and children. I must perish; but while they fall upon me you may escape." The servant then got down; he met the wolves and was devoured; during which time the lady and gentleman reached a place of safety.

Our Library Table.

Litt'e Sermons for Little People. By WILLIAM LOCKE. London: Partridge.

THIS little volume is an "old friend with a new face." Written by that earnest worker in Ragged Schools, Mr. W. Locke, they originally appeared in "Our Children's Magazine." Plain, yet pointed, being neither unsound in doctrine nor hazy in language, these "Little Sermons" were much liked by our young friends when they first appeared. They were equally liked when republished in a volume: and now that they are reprinted in larger type, on better paper, and with woodcuts, we do not think that they are likely to lose their popularity. Each sermon occupies two pages. Not many Ragged Schools, we regret to say, can afford to give away books; but in those cases where this plan is adopted, we do not think that our friends could do better than to present their scholars with a work which is based on the Bible from the first to the last.

Plain Thoughts by a Plain Man. Bermondsey: Boott.

THESE "Plain Thoughts" are written by a well-known supporter of the Bermondsey Ragged Schools. They treat on education, juvenile crime, drunkenness, and kindred topics. Whether we agree with the author or not, we think these thoughts deserve earnest consideration, for they are clearly the product of one who not only thinks, but who knows how to express what he thinks. We differ from him on the subject of compulsory education, which he strenuously advocates, thinking, as we do, that however suited to the climate of Prussia, it would fail in freer England. Still we are no friends to *compulsory ignorance;* and for that, among reasons of a more sacred character, give our hearty support to the Ragged School system. The history of these schools prove that the poor parents are not beyond the reach of moral suasion; and we doubt not that the 30,000 children estimated to be still outside the London Ragged Schools would soon be found inside were society to send the funds needful for their instruction. In the meantime, we thank God that, without a State subsidy, we are permitted to teach above 40,000 children and adults how to live so as not to fear death when it comes.

Correspondence.

FILTERS IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Through reading the article on Filters by "Q. in the Corner," on page 229 of the last volume of the RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE, which

was obligingly sent to me, I am glad to send five pounds for the purchase of four filters (*vide* page 231). If Lipscombe's are those approved of, I will send a Post-office order to be drawn by Mr. Joseph Gent, requesting that he will kindly have them sent to those schools where most needed.

I am, &c.,

*****

May 8th, 1867.

[With the money so kindly sent by Lady ——, four Lipscombe's filters, which will filter twelve gallons of water per diem, have been purchased. These have been presented to four large Ragged Schools, one in each of the districts into which London is divided. We hope that the example thus set will be copied by other ladies: and then it may be expected that our scholars will practically acquire a taste for pure water, and so cease to drink a fluid which we cannot but think, from its impurity, may properly be regarded as *liquid cholera*.—Ed.]

HINTS ON ADDRESSES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—Having noticed the following hints on addressing Sunday scholars in the "Sunday School Treasury," I have copied them, as I think them equally fitted for those teachers on whom the difficult task of addressing Ragged Schools devolve. It is scarcely needful to indicate that rules 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9, are equally adapted to those whose efforts are confined to the class. For without some preparation how can we expect to fix the attention of scholars so difficult to interest as ours? and without prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit what right have we to expect to reach the heart?

1. Let the subject be well prepared.
2. Wait till every eye is looking towards you, and not on any account allow whispering.
3. Let your subject be brief, and so well adapted that all may understand.
4. Let it be a Scripture subject; for the Bible cannot be too much impressed upon the minds of the young.
5. Speak in a clear, distinct voice, that all may hear, but not too loud.
6. Try to speak as if you were addressing each one individually.
7. By no means wander from your subject; for you will lose the attention of the scholars.
8. Trust not to your speaking, but look to Him who can bless the word spoken.
9. Let your address be prayed over, that the seed sown may be sown on good soil, to bring forth fruit in due season.

I am, &c.,

A. B. C.

Notices of Meetings.

FIELD LANE.

On Wednesday, June 5, the twenty-fifth annual meeting of this institution was held, the Earl of Shaftesbury presiding.

By the report it appeared that great progress had been made in the Schools, which had more than doubled themselves in the new building. There were now on the books in the day and evening schools 1,310 children, who were subdivided as follows:—Babies or infant day schools on the books, 250; average attendance, 163; garments made, 257. Boys and girls on the books, 580; average attendance, 312; new scholars, 301; garments made, 783; gone to work and to situations of permanency, 172. Boys' night school, 300; average attendance, 122. Girls' night school, on the books, 180; average attendance, 80. The girls' industrial class continued under the kind care of voluntary teachers, who manifested the deepest devotedness in promoting the welfare of the scholars. The girls were taught to cut out and make their own clothing, and the clothing made had very much increased. They were allowed to purchase garments at a reduction from the cost of the material. A Sick Fund had been introduced among the teachers and others to relieve cases of distress, arising from illness, or girls when they were out of work. There were upwards of 200 on the books, the average attendance being 141. The tailoring and shoemaking classes continued to exercise their usefulness, the average attendance being 40. The Mothers' Class had done, and continued to do, good service. The average attendance at that class was 60. There was a Clothing Club in connection with the institution, and the ladies who had founded and carried out to such a degree of success that branch of the school, had been the means of changing the whole appearance of the school. But for the advantages thus afforded, many of the children could not attend the school at all. The children's payments amounted to £55 11s. 7½d., and those of the women to £8 16s. 9d., for which sums 1,040 garments had been received. The Committee had again experienced the check afforded to the prize recipients by the rule which necessitated attendance at the Sunday Schools. The Committee, however, hailed with pleasure the appearance of some improvement. 43 boys and girls would receive prizes for remaining in places from 12 to 24 months; 12 young women would receive prizes of from 20s. to 40s. for keeping the same place in domestic service from 12 to 40 months. Amongst the latter class such a plan acts most advantageously in checking the desire, so prevalent amongst them, for a change of place. The Penny Bank was opened for two hours every Monday evening, and during the year there had been upwards of 900 depositors, who had paid in £163 16s. 1d., and received £92 4s. 9d., leaving a balance of £71 12s. 2d. The Maternal Society was actively exercising its humane efforts, and had been the means of saving many lives during the year. There were casual wards connected with the institution, and these afforded nightly refuge to the houseless poor. In these refuges something more was done than providing for their physical wants; 3,138 strangers had been sheltered in this refuge during the year, and 600 of these had been provided with situations. The Servants' Home had been very successful, notwithstanding the difficulty of the case. The Youths' Institute was also in a flourishing condition. The Ragged Church, frequented by homeless outcasts, had an average attendance of above 700—668 was the smallest,

The institution was in debt to the extent of £3,000. The Committee had to pay £150 *for local taxation*. Receipts, including a loan from bankers of £3,000, £8,110 13s. 4d.; expenditure, £8,110 13s. 4d.

The meeting was addressed by the Bishop of Cork, the Revs. Dr. Cumming, W. Conway, C. P. McCarthy, C. Prest, T. Scott, and Mr. Joseph Payne.

POPLAR.

The tenth anniversary of this School was held at the Burdett Hall, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair. The hall itself was quite full, and the class of persons present at once intimated that the Poplar Ragged Schools are not without influential friends.

The report stated that in the Day School there were about 100 children, varying in age from six to fifteen. In the Sunday Evening School the attendance fluctuates from 200 to 360, and the latter number might be easily maintained if an adequate supply of regular teachers could be secured. But the old, old story has still to be repeated, of teachers' chairs vacant, and the door unavoidably closed against many scholars clamorous for admission. The Boys' Night School next claims attention, where our visitor will find perhaps 90, or possibly 120 lads. The large numbers in attendance, and the difficulty of securing competent monitors, render it important that the master's hands should be supported by voluntary assistance, and such help is earnestly solicited. The highest attendance during the winter has been 122, the average 89. The Girls' Night School is doing a work equally as important amongst a class of girls who, during the day, have to fight the battle of life in the factory or the market garden, or, it may be, in the streets as vendors of water-cresses, &c., who gladly avail themselves of this link of connection with the school. During the winter the attendance has averaged 40, the largest 81. During the past year the Bank has opened 1,378 accounts, and received 8,100 deposits, amounting to £490 6s.; and made 1,294 repayments, representing £472 5s. 3d. The schools furnished 17 successful candidates (11 girls and 6 boys) for the prizes awarded by the Ragged School Union to scholars producing testimonials of more than twelve months service with good character. When that terrible scourge, the cholera, passed over this neighbourhood, our schools were not allowed to escape unvisited. Upwards of 60 children were deprived of father or mother, and 10 of our scholars were removed by the disease. Some of them died singing of the "realms of the blest," or of the "happy land, far, far away," of which they had learned in their Ragged School; and messages of love were sent by dying lips to their "dear teacher."

The unprecedented depression under which the commercial interests of this locality have so long suffered, very seriously affected the income last year, and a debt accrued to the amount of about £105. This, happily, has been entirely removed, in part by the handsome donation of £60 from one local gentleman, and the residue by liberal responses to an appeal to the City.

The meeting was addressed by Sir R. W. Carden, Rev. Dr. Smith, Rev. H. T. Bergner, S. Chester, R. J. Elliott, E. H. Jones, B. Pierce, &c., &c.

HOPE STREET.

An interesting social meeting of the friends of Hope Street School, Spitalfields, was recently held. The principal object of the meeting was to present to Mr. William Goodwin a testimonial of the high respect in which he is held by the teachers of the above school, with which he has been connected for above fifteen years. Mr. E. E. Hardwick, as organ of the teachers, delivered a short address, in which he spoke highly of Mr. Goodwin's valuable services as Honorary Secretary, and concluded by presenting him with a beautiful writing desk, which had been subscribed for by the teachers.

Papers, Original and Selected.

OUR VAGRANTS.

Of all the statistical papers issued annually by the Government, there are none so valuable as those entitled "Judicial Statistics." Unlike some statistical papers, which are "doctored" to support a theory, they may be fully relied on. In addition, we have correct figures, and not mere guesses as to the extent of our criminal population. Such figures, being *facts*, are unassailable, and supply a frightful insight into the morals and manners of a large section of the community.

It is not, however, our present purpose to refer to the criminal population, properly so called, but rather to describe a kindred class who are mentioned in these "Judicial Statistics." The class to which we refer always borders on the criminal class, even when it does not actually supply youth to be trained for professional crime —we refer to VAGRANTS. This class is becoming of almost gigantic proportions, for it appears that in England alone there are no less than 33,000 *known* professional tramps and vagrants. In these statistics are not included those occasional tramps whose vagrancy is not professional, but solely caused by sickness or weakness; for if these were added to the list, the number would be largely increased.

The regular vagrant regards vagrancy as much his regular calling as does the grocer or baker, and hence he is not ashamed of it. He begs or lounges throughout the day, and usually sleeps in a casual ward at night. He takes care, however, that the same casual ward does not see him too often, lest he should be recognised by the porter. In fact, this class has a kind of circuit, like our Judges, and it is so arranged as not to compete with the "round" of other vagrants. In this way the professional vagrant traverses England, staying in each town as long as he is allowed, or until that roaming fit to which he is subject comes on.

The reports of Poor Law Inspectors teem with descriptions of these idle vagabonds, as well female as male. Their life-motto—usually their only heirloom—is this: "It is better to starve than to work." This class of hereditary vagrants is, however, recruited by broken-down costermongers; deserters from the army; thieves

unnerved by disease; low harlots, mostly under 18 years of age; hawkers of lucifer matches, brass jewellery, and save-alls; "smashers," too well known by the police to carry on their trade; and by the scum constantly thrown up by the festering whirlpool of society. There is, however, always a slight admixture of men, women, and children who may be regarded with pity, for they have been thrown into this wretched class either by chronic debility, or by want of sufficient energy to cope with the demands of this hot-pressure age.

The comparative youth of the professional vagrants is a noticeable feature in this class. Few have attained 40 years; the majority not exceeding 20. The bulk, from the hard lives they lead—for they slave as hard to be idle as others do to earn their bread—bear every sign of age, even in extreme youth. Thus, a vagrant said to us, "Call Spider-legs a young man, teacher! why, he is an old 'un. Why, he is nearly 30!"

It is saddening to know that the majority of vagrants are born to this wretched inheritance. Their parents were vagrants before them, and it will probably be the sad heritage of their children, for the vagrant either marries when a mere boy, or more commonly lives with a female without that rite. But whether vagrancy comes from birthright or is caused by inherent idleness, still vagrants spend their lives without any object, save to live without work, which they dread far more than they do the bars of a jail. So strong is this feeling, that many of this unhappy fraternity ofttimes risk starvation rather than break the few stones or pick the quantity of oakum without which they are properly refused breakfast in our casual wards.

We called them a "fraternity," and the term is warranted by their unwritten but binding laws. For example, they have a dialect of their own; common words having another meaning to that affixed by Johnson's dictionary. Rarely knowing the real surnames of their brethren, they recognise each other by nicknames usually derived from some personal defect. Thus, too, they have regular circuits, which they communicate to each other—sometimes by writing on the walls of casual wards—before traversing the intended route; and so strong is the point of honour, even in this degraded class, that they are not known to reach the "round" of another before the time fixed by their comrade to leave. Again, when any alteration is made, either in diet, task-work, or dormitories in the casual wards, the news is conveyed to every vagrant

by a species of *human telegraph;* for each tells the first vagrant he meets of the alteration, who then passes it on to the next; so that the news speedily reaches the vagrant class from Northumbria to the Land's End.

This picture of vagrancy would not be complete without refering to that vagrants' elysium—the casual ward. Of their conduct in these places the night masters give the Poor Law Inspectors such accounts as follows:—"I frequently hear them singing obscene songs, cursing and swearing, or relating some begging adventure;" . . . "many of them spend a great part of the night in singing and dancing, and telling each other their adventures and the whereabouts of their acquaintances." The walls of these wards are used as means of communication with "pals," for there are gangs that "work" districts and make their circuits as regularly as the Judges, and know who will follow them. Notices like these may be copied from the walls:—"Saucy Harry and his moll will be at Chester to eat their Christmas dinner, when they hope Saucer and the fraternity will meet them at the Union; 14th of November, 1865;" "Taffy, the Sanctus, was here on the 28th of November, 1865." "If Dusty Jack calls, tell him to be at the Lord Mayor's Show." Sometimes they get an able man among them. There is one who always signs himself "Bow Street," probably from his first committal, who must have ability of no common kind. As described by Mr. Andrew Doyle, Poor Law Inspector for Lancashire and Cheshire, he is a man of imperfect education, with a tendency towards versification. He got into Stafford Gaol, where a course of education improved his powers. After his release, he wrote on the wall of the tramp ward in Newport Union these verses, which are not unworthy of Thomas Hood:—

"A PRISON.

"No sun, no moon;
No morn, no noon;
No sky, no earthly blue;
No distant-looking view;
No road, no street;
No t'other side the way;
No dawn, no dusk;
No proper time of day;
No end to any row;
No top to any steeple;
No indication where to go;

No sight of familiar people;
No cheerfulness, no healthy ease;
No butterflies;
Nor yet no bees.—*Bow Street.*"

The question recurs, What is to be done to extinguish evils like these, eating, as they do like some terrible growing cancer, into the very heart of our social system? The late Right Hon. Charles Buller, when presiding over the Poor Law Board, suggested the refusal of relief to all young able-bodied men who, in the opinion of the relieving-officers, were not actually destitute; the exaction of a suitable task of work; the employment of police-officers as assistant relieving-officers; and a system of certificates to be given to the casual poor for production at their next place of sojourn. But the strict application of the rules laid down by Mr. Buller did not long survive his death; and Poor Law officials consider themselves precluded from refusing relief to any applicant who alleges that he is destitute, and in whose possession, after being searched, there is not found sufficient money to pay for his lodging. The reports recently made by the Poor Law Inspectors show the need of reverting to some such system as that recommended by Mr. Buller, and of its being observed *uniformly* throughout the country. The grant or refusal of relief to able-bodied vagrants must be a matter of discretion; public feeling would not allow an indiscriminate refusal, which, indeed, might make begging necessary to sustain life. This excuse for begging, as Mr. Graves says in his report, should everywhere be done away with, and even the vagrant should have the means of obtaining a modicum of assistance from public sources at a stage of destitution somewhat short of starvation. The exaction of a task of work is a great deterrent, for nothing is more distasteful to the habitual vagrant than work. Mr. Hawley is of opinion that scarcely any of the professional vagrants would accept relief if an obligation to work in the morning were enforced. Dr. Edward Smith recommends three hours' labour, with power to remit a part or the whole where the vagrant is *bonâ fide* seeking employment; and along with this check upon applications he advocates improved treatment, with the power to vary the diet according to the health, age, and apparent misfortune of the vagrant. Some of the Inspectors are of opinion that the administration of relief to vagrants should be transferred entirely to the police, and that vagrant-wards should be established in connection with the principal police-stations. Dr.

Edward Smith considers it most important that power should be obtained by which more speedy and severe punishment may be inflicted upon those—chiefly girls—who tear their clothes or make use of obscene or abusive language. Uniformity of system is indispensable in a reform of vagrant relief; and uniformity, writes Mr. Graves, will not be obtained as long as it is profitable to neglect the duty of relieving the destitute, and possible to throw the weight upon others. The expenses of suitable relief are not very onerous; but they are unwillingly incurred, because they are bestowed on persons who have no real claim on the pockets of the local ratepayers.

But it will be seen that every plan devised by the Poor Law Inspectors applies solely to adult vagrancy, and thus leaves the question how to *kill* the system—by at least precluding its recruitment among juveniles—unanswered. For the question of questions still remains—Can anything, and what, be done to save the children of tramps and vagrants from the terrible evils incident to vagrancy? If still left in the charge of parents who do not know, and perchance never learnt the responsibility of the parental relation, it is clear that their children will be trained to the same life of idleness and vice; and thus a race of vagrants will be perpetuated, to the disgrace of our common Christianity. We are the last who would wish to interfere with the natural rights of a parent, regarding as we do that relationship, constituted as it is by God, as being too sacred to be broken by legislative enactment. Yet if parents do not know, or choose to ignore, their responsibility both to God and man, then surely society may step in, not merely for its own protection, but for the weal of the rising race, and do that which the parent has declined to perform.

Happily, in the case of juvenile vagrancy a remedy is at hand. For, by the Industrial School Act passed last year, any child under 14 who is sent out to beg, or who is destitute of a *home*—which a casual ward assuredly is not—may be sent to a certified Industrial School, and be there trained to habits of prudence and industry. By the 14th section it appears that if a magistrate is satisfied, he can send a child, apparently under 14, to a Certified Industrial School. Its application is not confined to the police, for "*any person*" can take a child found begging before a magistrate, whether actually or under the pretext of offering articles for sale, or being in any street or public place for the purpose of begging, or who is found wandering and not having any home or settled place

of abode or visible means of subsistence, or being destitute, or an orphan, or having a parent in prison.

This valuable Act is, we are glad to say, being enforced; the Reformatory Union, indeed, employs an agent for that special purpose. Our only fear is that the public, by declining to put it into execution personally, may devolve its enforcement on the police or other officials, and thus that the most crafty hereditary juvenile vagrants will escape. Yet in this, as in all kindred cases, we cannot delegate our responsibilities on others, seeing that we have been constituted our "brother's keeper" by God. In criminal supineness we may neglect our duty, but in the shape of Casual Wards of Juvenile Reformatories, we cannot escape our share of the penalty. But what is still worse, the conscience of the true Christian cannot but be haunted with the terrible vision of lost moral wealth, and, it may be, of lost souls. It was the special charge against the ancient Jews that in their "skirts was found the blood of the young innocents." This, like the blood of Abel, cried from the ground, and eventually brought with it national ruin. May grace keep us from being chargeable with the blood of lost souls, especially of those juvenile vagrants, all of whom, before Ragged Schools and Refuges were formed, could too truly say, "No man careth for our souls!"

BATH CHILDREN'S FRIEND SOCIETY.

BY REV. W. C. OSBORNE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the exertions made in the city of Bath for the education of the poor, there are some hundreds of children growing up in ignorance. There are classes of the poor who are either unwilling or unable to avail themselves of the present schools for the instruction of their children. It is difficult to arrive at the number of such cases, to obtain a knowledge of their condition as to education, and to ascertain the causes which conduce to their ignorant, miserable, and destitute state. The following information, therefore, collected from various sources and by different means, verified in most cases by personal inquiry, it is hoped will be suggestive to those who regard the education of the poor as one of the most important questions of the day.

A list of about 200 boys, who are above 10 and under 15 years of age, belonging to the most destitute families living in Bath, has been made, giving their abodes, ages, domestic, educational, and social condition. From this partial and limited information, collected by one individual, it is evident that there is a considerable number of children in Bath unaffected by any existing educational machinery. From this table it appears that 95 of them have been committed to the Bath Gaol, that a majority of them are totally unable

to read or spell an easy word, and not attending any Sunday, Night, or Day School, are growing up in the grossest ignorance. About a fourth are perhaps able to read easy words, and a few may be able to stammer through a verse of Scripture; but this ability must be lost in a year or two unless further instruction is given. Those children, amongst them who have been degraded and cruelly treated by imprisonment inflicted by the law of the land, upon their next apprehension for any offence may possibly be sent to an Industrial or Reformatory School for four or five years, and so cost the public about a hundred pounds apiece. But if, on their next appearance before a magistrate, they should be above 16 years of age, then there will be nothing for them but a gaol life, or penal servitude; alleviated it may be by a prison education, but accompanied it must be with a life-long degradation, which may bring a burden and a curse upon the country, and a disgrace upon our Christianity and civilization.

With a desire to meet the wants of these poor helpless children, applications and suggestions have been made to the committees of existing educational and charitable institutions in Bath, but without success; hence it becomes necessary to place the subject before the public, and invite to it their kind and immediate consideration. It is proposed that a "Children's Friend Society" be formed in this city, which shall undertake to obtain information respecting the educational, domestic, social, and religious condition of the poorest classes of children; to use every means to induce children hitherto neglected in their education to attend the ordinary schools for the children of the poor, and establish a Day School for the instruction and industrial employment of such children as are not able to attend the ordinary schools without some assistance being rendered to them in the supply of clothes, food, &c.

A Day Ragged School is much needed in Bath, and the want of it has been felt for many years by those who have observed the connection between poverty, ignorance, and crime. The Committee of the Bath Evening Ragged School have kindly offered the use of their buildings in Corn Street, for the purposes of a Day Ragged School, at a small annual rental.

This important matter is now committed to the hearts of our benevolent and Christian public. Bath is able and willing, doubtless, to educate her own poor, and will not, we trust, disregard the condition of her most ignorant, destitute, and helpless children. Will not then the public of Bath open a school for 50 or 100 of the children above referred to, and give them daily some hours of instruction, industrial employment, and recreation? If so, a guarantee of funds for three years is asked. The expenses are estimated at £5 for each child per annum.

This appeal is made to the public by one who for five-and-twenty years has studied the history of the "wretched" belonging to our city, in their lives and in their dwellings. Christian friends! To teach ignorant adults is a difficult task, therefore let us do our duty to the poor children, and thus redeem our past neglect, for "verily we are guilty concerning our brother."

GOSPEL WORKERS.

How often is the heart of the Christian teacher, and even of the Christian minister, cast down on removing to a new district, by the sin and worldliness he sees abounding in it! "I can never be useful here," is the common feeling. "I can never make headway against such flood-tides of iniquity."

It was the boast of Augustus that he "found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble." So many a humble Christian has made some desert place of earth "to bud and blossom as the rose," because he went forth in the strength of One more mighty than any of earth's princes. It was said of Mr. Robinson that when he removed to the town of Leicester he found it sunk in sin and degradation. With an earnest love for the souls as well as for the bodies of men, he set himself about the work of reformation. Little by little he gained on the enemy's strongholds, until at length the town became as noted for piety as it had been for wickedness. He reared no beautiful edifice of marble, he constructed no famous aqueduct or fountains which should make for himself a name among men, but he reared for himself a monument a thousand times more enduring.

He who writes God's truth on the pages of a single soul, leading that soul to Jesus, does a greater work than he who builds a marble city. It is a work that even the humblest may perform. God giveth his grace to the lowly. Let no one despond though his field looks dreary and unpromising. God does not send all his missionaries to the heathen. He often places a Christian family in a seemingly most uncongenial neighbourhood; but if his providence has clearly marked out the way, it is the very spot where they can best glorify him. Like a city set on a hill, they may give light to all around. What a blessing to a weak Ragged School, just struggling for existence, to have a devoted Christian added to it. By this we mean one who will hold up the hands of the discouraged superintendent, and put his shoulder to the wheel of every Gospel work; one who is always in his place in the Ragged School; who takes little wandering waifs by the hand and leads them to it; who has always a good, earnest word in the prayer-meeting, and who lives religion every day.

Every one may be such a builder and co-worker with God. It does not require high intellectual gifts or attainments, nor vast possessions, to do all this for Christ; but one such labourer is a host in any society. Are you such a Gospel worker in the field in which God has placed you?

THE THREE BARGEMEN'S DAUGHTERS.

Our volume for 1866 (pp. 94 and 165) contained two letters on training outcast or destitute girls for domestic service. The following paper, by the same writer, is extracted, with permission, from the "Christian Treasury." G. J. is no mere theorist, for we have known her for many years as an active worker in Ragged Schools and kindred institutions. She says that:—

Prevention is, at all times, and under any circumstances, better than finding remedies for evils already existing. This must be apparent to any

one who has taken an interest in the management of Reformatories, or who has occasionally visited our prisons. Many young creatures of both sexes are at present inmates of such places of discipline, who, if helping hands had been held out to them as they entered life, might now be earning an honest livelihood, instead of living for months, or even years, at the expense of their country, or of private benevolence; in too many cases returning to society, at the expiry of their allotted term, far more hardened in wickedness than they were at first.

Want of education, and the entire absence of early training, are the primary causes of much of the wickedness that surrounds us. The writer, who, through divine mercy, has been privileged for the last seventeen years to take a part in the management of one of the oldest and largest of the Female Reformatories in London, trusts, by relating a few of the distressing applications for admission, which come before the committee at their weekly meetings, that some of our readers may be stirred up to provide a remedy for the ignorance that so largely prevails.

Before relating these, it may be stated that these Reformatories are established for the reception of young women who have strayed from the paths of virtue; that they are there trained in everything that may fit them for domestic service; that they are taught to read and know the Scriptures; and, after two years of this training, situations are found them in some respectable family, where, under God's blessing, they may in future lead decent and godly lives.

There are other institutions to which females may be sent who have been criminally convicted before a magistrate, where they are subjected to a similar probation.

Both these classes of Reformatories are of a most comfortable, nay, to what many of the inmates have been accustomed, almost of a luxurious description, thus holding out a positive premium to do wrong; while those applicants who are guilty of no other crime than that of being poor and ignorant, are, alas! sent adrift, until they are actually qualified by their sins to be received into one or other of these houses of mercy.

Very recently two young women applied on the same day for admission into the institution referred to. The applicants are seen separately, and in the order in which they come. Neither of them could read, or had been at school; but their previous mode of life having made them *perfectly eligible* for admission, they were at once received, and are now undergoing the training to which I have referred, which, we trust, by the blessing of God, to be instrumental in yet making them useful members of society.

As a contrast to this, I shall relate the following:—

A fortnight later we had an unusual number of applicants for admission. The first whom we saw was a girl aged seventeen. She was neither ragged nor depraved looking: her tale was simple enough. Her father was a bargeman on the Regent's Canal at Paddington; her mother died when she was young, leaving one brother older, and two sisters younger than herself. The children grew up as they could; not one of them could read, never having been at school; not one of them had ever been within the door of a place of worship. This poor girl only knew of God's holy name by having heard it taken in vain; had heard of Jesus Christ, but did not know who he

was; in short, was as ignorant as a heathen: yet she had not strayed from the paths of virtue, and had never been in prison.

The next case was almost similar. A stout, nice-looking girl of eighteen presented herself. She was equally ignorant; she had a drunken mother; her father, too, was a bargeman, who was often away for days at a time, navigating his barge through the canals which intersect the interior of the English counties; she had never been brought up or taught to do anything, but "worked about," as she termed it. She also was not qualified for the benefits of the institution.

The third case which I will describe was the most distressing of the three. She was a pretty, innocent-looking girl of sixteen, wearing tolerably decent mourning for her mother, only recently dead; but she had been taught no more than the others. She had not done wrong, she said; her father worked at the canal wharf, also at Paddington.

We detained these three girls till the close of our business, and had some further conversation with them. They were all three friends and neighbours; and, as they expressed it, being tired of running about idle, they had set out with the intention of trying to get something to do.

What could we do for them? They could not be admitted to the benefits of an institution for which a terrible qualification was necessary. There were Servants' Homes, it is true; but these poor girls had, from their ignorance, no claim for admission into any of these; and, being utterly untaught, it was very unlikely that they could obtain service in any respectable family. We gave them some pecuniary assistance and much good advice, the address of one or two Homes, in which they might possibly find a vacancy (though not at all sanguine of their reception), and begged them to go, at all events, to a Ragged School, where they would gain some instruction, and perchance find some kind friends to help them. All of us present felt very, very sad, and many a trembling prayer was offered up in their behalf, that they might not fall into such temptations as would entitle them to be received into such homes as even our comfortable asylum.

Cases such as these three poor girls are not confined to our busy London, with its three millions of inhabitants; poverty and ignorance are to be found, alas! in all our large cities, and even our villages. Children are born and grow up to years of understanding, without training, without education, without the knowledge of a gracious God and a loving Saviour. There are many industrial homes, training ships, and other institutions for boys, though by no means so many as are needed; but it is a lamentable fact, that for destitute girls there are few such asylums available. Means of employment for them are scarce; the introduction of the sewing machine is fast depriving many of the scanty pittance they were wont to earn as sempstresses; and the state of matters loudly calls for some energetic measures to provide employment for this interesting class.

A supply of good domestic servants, especially for families of moderate means, has been long felt to be a great desideratum. How many hundreds of girls and young women—were the means of sufficiently training them for domestic duties to be obtained—would be enabled to occupy a position in life which would not only qualify them for service, but fit them for those orderly home duties which their present position as daughters,

and their future prospects as wives, so urgently demand! In this way many a miserable dwelling would be made a comfortable home, and the evils which we have attempted to describe would, in an incalculable degree, be remedied, to the great social advantage of our beloved country, and to the growth of vital godliness in the land.

May God grant that this humble suggestion, springing from a heart terribly sensible of the growing evils around, may have the effect of inclining some of the great and good of the land to haste to the rescue of girls as poor and as destitute as the three bargemen's daughters of Paddington.

G. J.

HOME FOR LITTLE BOYS.

TWELVE months have passed away since we reported (see vol. for 1866, p. 200) that the Princess of Wales laid the foundation-stone of the new Home for Little Boys at Horton Kirby, near Farningham, Kent. The good work then so auspiciously commenced has since prospered, and is likely to develop itself still further, and to an extent calculated to well please practical friends of charity. On Saturday, June 15th, the public opening of the new buildings took place under circumstances and with results highly satisfactory. The proceedings in connection with the opening commenced with a meeting in the school-room building, which was presided over by Mr. Robert Hanbury, and at which addresses were delivered, hymns sung in which the children joined, and prayers offered for God's blessing on the institution. After the meeting the members of the Committee conducted the visitors over the various buildings, and gave information respecting them and the objects for which they were erected. The object and principles of the institution are to feed, clothe, educate, and train to industrial work, homeless and destitute little boys and those in danger of falling into crime, whether orphans or not, who are disqualified by poverty or other circumstances from admission to orphan asylums or other institutions. It is a rule absolute that the basis of the institution shall be Scriptural but unsectarian, that the Committee shall always consist of members of various Protestant denominations, and that, without introducing any catechism, the children shall be educated in the fear of God and the knowledge of the Scriptures.

The institution was established in March, 1864. It commenced with 14 children. In less than two years the premises which had been rented by the Committee at Tottenham became full with 90 boys, while many urgent cases were pressing for admission, and had to be excluded from lack of room. To provide for this want the site near Farningham was taken, and the erection of the buildings opened on June 15th resulted. While making provision for the ultimate reception of 300 boys, the Committee have very properly sought to avoid the evils of congregating children of the class to be served in large numbers. The buildings erected are therefore designed so that not more than 30 boys shall live in one house. These are placed under the charge of a man and his wife, who, as the father and mother of the family, are responsible for their domestic training. During the day the men from the several houses will be in charge of the workshops attached to the principal build-

ing, and the women perform the household duties, the boys assisting as far as possible.

In the appeal originally issued by the Committee, it was suggested that, as a system of separate houses was to be adopted, there might be found those who would be able and willing to give or to raise the cost of the houses, and thus have the privilege of naming them. Not only have the four houses originally contemplated been in one way or another appropriated, but a fifth house has also been erected under specially interesting circumstances. A proposal was made to the Committee by the Honorary Secretary to raise amongst children the cost of a house, so that the children of England who have homes should build a home for those who have none. A most encouraging response has been made to the special appeal to children. The five houses are thus appropriated:—No. 1: By permission of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, by whom the requisite funds were collected, this house is named "The Alexandra House." No. 2: This house is named "The Hanbury House." Only a few days before his illness the late Mr. Hanbury had obtained from his family the generous donation of £500, which, with his own contributions, completed the cost of the house. It will thus be a permanent and practical memento of his services to the institution. No. 3: The cost of this house has been defrayed by the congregation of the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, at Hare Court Chapel, Canonbury. No. 4: This house will be known as the "Children's Cottage," in commemoration of the willing help of many little hearts and hands on behalf of the "little boys." No. 5: The cost of this house has been promised by Lady Morrison, which will bear her name. There are besides a school building and a central building. The former contains a main room, a class room, and an infants' room, with gallery. It will be used as the school for the whole of the boys, and also for service on Sundays. The central building is for the following purposes:—Residence for the superintendents and schoolmistresses; committee and visitors' rooms; stores for the whole institution, from which the various houses will be supplied; bakehouse, in which the bread for the Home will be made; laundry, where the washing for all the houses will be done; workshops and workroom for the boys; engine-house, with tanks, for supplying water to all the buildings.

Mrs. Raleigh, wife of the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, formally handed over to the Committee the house contributed by her rev. husband's congregation. Next came a ceremony which was decidedly the most interesting feature of the day's proceedings. It took place in front of the "Children's Cottage." Behind a table, in front of one of the side windows of the cottage, Lord Shaftesbury, Lady Constance Ashley, the Bishop of Cork, Mr. J. Payne, Mr. A. O. Charles, and Mr. Williams arranged themselves. Beyond the noble earl and his party, and only separated from them by a sort of gangway, assembled those influential persons who had come down to add *éclat* to the occasion by their presence, and, as it afterwards proved, to give a strong impetus to the praiseworthy movement by a subtraction from their several exchequers. After the singing of a well-chosen piece by the boys of the institution, and a statement by the Hon. Secretary respecting the Children's Fund, twenty neatly-attired boys and girls, representatives of the children who had been the means of realizing the funds necessary for the erection of the house in question, appeared upon the scene.

Two abreast they approached the table before mentioned, and as they passed presented Lady Constance Ashley with purses, the contents of which, it was stated, amounted to close upon £1,200. After this important little performance, the visitors were treated to an inspection of the boys as they appear when dining at their respective Homes.

The Earl of Shaftesbury presided at the luncheon. After the luncheon statements were made by Mr. A. O. Charles and Mr. W. H. Willan as to the past work and present position of the institution, and speeches were delivered by Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. J. Payne, Mr. G. Hanbury, Sir H. Verney, and Mr. R. Hanbury, the President of the institution. From these various statements it appeared that it was hoped the present number of boys in the institution would soon be increased to the 150 the five houses opened June 15th can accommodate. All that was needed was the necessary funds. The five other houses, to provide for the full number of 300 boys, still remain to be provided for. The total outlay in connection with the new buildings was estimated as follows:—Purchase of land and legal expenses, £2,000; contract for schools, central buildings, and five dwellings, with extras, £7,900; engine-house and water supply, £500; architect and clerk of the works, £500; furniture, and other extra expenses, £1,000—total £11,900. Towards this there had been received or promised about £8,900, so that a further sum of £3,000 was required to cover the cost of the whole. The collection of June 15th went a good way to make up this deficiency. The cost of land, buildings, &c., amounts to £11,900; amount contributed, £8,900; still to be raised, £3,000; income for last year (exclusive of building fund), £1,803; expenditure for last year (exclusive of building fund), £2,006; present amount of annual subscriptions, £461.

Among the subscriptions announced were Mrs. Hanbury, widow of the late President of the institution, £147, herself 100 guineas, and making four of her children life governors; Mr. R. Hanbury, the President, in addition to what had already been contributed by his family, a sum sufficient to make his children life governors; Mr. George Moore, 50 guineas; and Mr. Homan 300 guineas on behalf of a number of gentlemen who had banded themselves together for the consideration of the best mode of expressing their admiration of the late Mr. Culling Hanbury, and who now gave 300 guineas for the Home for Little Boys, and intended the balance of what they had collected to be handed over to the Boys' Refuge in Whitechapel, the first of such institutions with which the late Mr. Hanbury became connected. In this way they have founded a perpetual memorial to Mr. R. Hanbury, M.P.

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK IN LONDON.

NORTH AND EAST.

The following particulars are extracted from the Report of the School Agent (Mr. Curtis) engaged in the northern and eastern districts of the metropolis.

During the past year the following number of visits were made by me:—

Day Schools	556
Evening Schools	300
Sunday Schools	124
Conferences on School Business	114
Refuges	9
Committee Meetings	12
Public Meetings	15
Parents' Meetings.	7
	1,137

During the present, as also in the previous year, a very great number of the dwellings of the poor have been pulled down in the neighbourhoods of Whitecross Place, Agar Town, Field Lane, Vine Street, Cock and Castle Lane, and Shoe Lane.

More than a thousand houses have been swept away, principally to subserve railway purposes.

NEW, RESUMED, AND EXTENDED OPERATIONS.

Sunday Schools.—Afternoon, 7; evening, 4. Day Schools, 3; Evening Schools, 5; School Libraries, 4; Religious Services, 5; Sewing Classes, 3; Singing Class, 1; Mothers' Meetings, 3; Youths' Institutes, 3; Teachers' Bible Class, 1; Bands of Hope, 2; Penny Bank, 1; Clothing Club, 1; Prayer Meeting, 1; Youths' Bible Class, 1; Soup Kitchen, 1—Total, 46.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

North and East of London.

No. of Schools open in the	Morning,	56;	Attendance, 2,375
Ditto ditto	Afternoon,	69;	do. about 8,000
Ditto ditto	Evening,	56;	do. 7,000

During the year the following Afternoon operations have been originated or annexed to this Society, viz.:—Bateman's Row, Shoreditch; Hartshorn Court and Brackley Street, Golden Lane; Kentish Town; York Place, Strand; John's Place, Commercial Road; and Chequer Alley, Whitecross Street; and also the following Evening operations:—Gun Street; Kentish Town; York Place; Chicksand Street, and Chequer Alley.

The attendance of the day scholars at the Sunday School has improved during the past year, but there is still much room for improvement. The matter will not be properly attended to until it is systematically done. I recommend that the numbers absent from school on the previous Sunday should be furnished by the teacher of the Day School every week, along with the ordinary weekly returns; that some member of the Committee, some lady visitor, or some one connected with the Sunday School, should attend at least once a month and have some talk with the regular defaulters; also the homes should be visited, either to test the children's statements or to overcome the reluctance or indifference of the parents. I have myself frequently

taken child by child in order to ascertain the cause of absence; in many cases the excuses were frivolous.

The number of voluntary teachers is 1,733; average attendance, 1,207. It must be borne in mind that the whole of the 1,733 do not engage to attend every Sabbath, but many only on alternate Sabbaths, so that if this be considered the number of defaulters will be comparatively few.

Some schools still adopt the very admirable plan of inaugurating their winter course by a preliminary meeting, at which they forecaste their work and estimate their available strength. Others continue to hold an annual tea meeting, to which not only teachers but their friends are invited. Upon such occasions a topic is submitted for discussion, touching on the importance of the work and the need for labourers. Some schools are particular in registering the attendance of their teachers, writing to, or calling on them when absent; by social meetings, by meetings for prayer, and by a variety of ways, forming such Christian friendship as makes the school an attraction, and invests it with all the charm of a home Many of the schools continue to hold their Bible Classes, and more have been added during the past year. These classes form the connecting link between scholars and teachers, by means of which the more promising pupils are trained for the work of teaching, and on which some of our institutions rely as their principal resource for teachers. In one, five or six in the Boys', and the same number in the Girls' School, were pointed as having been reared in the Bible Class. Many other schools state, as an evidence of the good results of the Sabbath-day instruction, that a considerable number of their present teachers were formerly among their scholars. In my last year's Report I offered some suggestions touching the mode of appeal for voluntary teachers, which are recorded on pp. 176 and 177 of the *Ragged School Union Magazine*. I beg to recommend those suggestions for consideration.

Homerton Row has an appeal for teachers, printed in bold type and neatly framed and glazed, suspended in a very conspicuous place in the vestibule of the chapel with which they are somewhat related. The appeal has borne fruit.

During the past year a training class for teachers has been established in connection with Bluegate Fields and superintended by Mr. Woolfe. The class is ably conducted. It meets every Thursday, with an average attendance of 20; all who attend it are delighted with the opening up of the Word of God that has resulted from its establishment. Besides this there is a Breakfast Meeting once a month on a Sunday morning at 8 o'clock for the consideration *specially* of religious topics. A paper is read, and all are invited to make their comments. This class and breakfast was adopted with a view to the education of teachers for their work and for the purpose of augmenting the staff, and such results have been obtained.

It has often occurred to me as a very great defect in our Churches that a tabulated registration is not made year by year of the members who are engaged in Christian work. It would then be seen how many were unemployed.

DAY SCHOOLS.

In the districts under my superintendence there are 16 Boys' Schools, with

an attendance of 1,335; 14 Girls' Schools, with an attendance of 1,000; 68 Mixed Schools, with an attendance of 8,300.

New operations—Bateman's Row, York Place, Chicksand Street, Hartshorn Court.

Some few schools have a little declined in numbers owing to the great destruction of the dwellings of the poor, but not to so great an extent as was apprehended. The loss has been made up by the new efforts and the increase in other schools.

EXAMINATIONS.—Number present, 9,575; examined, 5,741. Reading good, 1,137; moderate, 1,237. Writing good, 1,238; moderate, 1,299. Bible good, 839; moderate, 1,020. Tables, Multiplication, 1,205; Money, 859. Notation, 3 figures, 1,638; 4 figures, 1,056. Arithmetic:—Addition, 2,157; Subtraction, 1,026; Multiplication, 888; Division, 421; Long Division, 118; Money—Addition, 230; Subtraction, 103; Multiplication, 73; Division, 44. The number present and the number examined were greater this year than last. All above six years were included as of age to be examined.

The printed alphabets of the written character recommended by me last year have been adopted by some teachers. Placed in a conspicuous position, the children are required to imitate the letter or letters from the sheet After this is done the teacher writes the copy on the black-board, by which any mistakes in the formation of the letters are pointed out. When the letters are well known, easy words are dictated, the children are required to write from memory or find the letters on the sheet; by this means the letters are fixed in the memory of the child. The word is afterwards written on the black-board and again mistakes, either in the letter, mode of formation, or articulation, are pointed out. I think an average child of six years of age, if attending regularly, might be taught in a year every letter of the alphabet from memory, and in two years to write words of two to four letters from dictation.

The amount of religious knowledge as per tabulated statement, simply indicates a knowledge of the great facts which lie at the basis of and illustrate our faith. A great deal of religious knowledge, viz., textual, would not be measured by the test applied. The amount of influence exercised over the heart and conscience of the child by constant contact with a pious teacher is immeasurable by the most delicate human tests, and is only registered by Divine Omniscience.

There are but very few schools without their attendance books, which are usually well kept: the reasons of absence are not so frequently entered as they might be.

I am glad to say that time tables are on the increase. Circumstances may occasionally occur to disarrange the plan, but the time will, as a general rule, be more economically disposed of when thus methodically and definitely fixed than when left to the determination of the moment. Besides, there is this advantage about a time table, that those who are in the habit of visiting the school cannot only see the proportion of time given to the main articles of instruction, but also the time fixed for a particular subject, say reading, or Bible lesson; they may then arrange for a visit, it may be to take a class or to witness the painstaking effort of the teacher to impress religious truth on the child's heart. In the school at Holloway, ladies are in the habit of

calling at certain specified times and taking classes, while of an afternoon a gentleman who in former years had some connection with teaching gives aid in the Arithmetic classes. I should be glad to see this example generally adopted. It would be a great boon were ladies or gentlemen of education and refinement to visit the schools in their respective neighbourhoods for the purpose of helping the teacher, and, above all, helping the children in their Reading, Writing, or Arithmetic. Their presence would give a tone to all the operations; the countenance or sympathy of such visitors would be a great incentive to the teacher. The visitors to the school who engage the teachers in a lengthened conversation by taking them away from their work, slacken the reins of control and do more harm than good. The best teachers are always in their work and at their work, not merely looking on, or confiding to monitors.

I have given attention to the matter of the class of children attending our schools. Many have been removed, on some improvement in the circumstances of their parents, while in all cases I have found that the safeguards of inquiries, visitations, and admissions through the recommendations of missionaries or lady visitors, have been steadily maintained.

EVENING SCHOOLS—NORTH AND EAST LONDON.

In the above districts there are 41 Boys', 38 Girls', and 25 Mixed Schools, with an attendance averaging between four and five thousand.

There are 27 schools conducted by voluntary teachers, 20 schools conducted by paid teachers having more or less of voluntary help, and 6 having some extra paid assistance. One evening operation has been suspended through the death of one of our most active friends, Mr. Molineux.

New operations—Brackley Street, Chequer Alley, Kentish Town, Ernest Street, York Place, Hartshorn Court, John's Place, and Chicksand Street (resumed). Milton Yard has an excellent attendance. The almost full attendance at the beginning of the school is secured by the opening of the door an hour before the time. The boys as they assemble are allowed to play at drafts or amuse themselves in any noiseless way.

In order to maintain and increase the evening attendance, I have recommended that at the close of the teaching, especially on Sunday evenings, a minute or two should be allowed for each teacher to invite those boys and girls who go to work to attend the Week Evening School. As neither a printed notice nor the notice by the superintendent will avail much, the scholars require inviting and pressing. At a Committee Meeting (Albert Street) which I recently attended for the purpose of obtaining voluntary aid, it was stated by the superintendent that such an ignorance of letters was on some occasions disclosed at their Sunday Evening School, that it appeared to him a duty, when time permitted, to do something to remove that ignorance; he urged this consideration on his fellow-teachers.

As an example to others, I record the following statement of an excellent lady, a teacher in Parker Street. She says:—

"On reviewing our work of the past two years, it is interesting to observe what a great influence for good the *Evening School* has upon our Sunday Classes; the time for teaching seems so short on Sunday evenings, and it is

then almost impossible to obtain any individual knowledge of the boys. Visiting at their homes or lodging-houses is generally impracticable, as they are out all day, so that the Evening School is the only means of getting an insight into their daily life; and the feeling that their teacher is interested in each little matter that concerns them gives much weight to the Sunday teaching. For example—

"A. B. is a strong active lad of sixteen. Last February twelvemonths he was in a most deplorable condition; turned out of house and home by a drunken father when quite incapable of work from an affection of the spine. We got him in the Homœopathic Hospital, where he had a month's rest and nourishment, but they could do nothing for his back. We then sent him to a physician on whose opinion we could rely. He said there was but one thing which would do him any good, an instrument for the chest and back. It was impossible for the boy to procure this himself, but, with the assistance of a few friends, we soon made up the requisite sum; a situation was obtained for him where his strength was not much tried. He has stayed in this place ever since. Being now able to do harder work he has better wages, and is supporting himself respectably. What would this lad have been without the Ragged School? Most probably either a helpless cripple or consigned to an early grave.

"C. D., now a very respectable-looking youth of seventeen, was brought to my Sunday Class one evening by A. B.; both were then living in one of the common lodging-houses. I was struck by the dejected, dispirited appearance of the lad. Notwithstanding, there was something in his face which seemed to speak of former better days. I found that he was an orphan and utterly friendless. He had received an excellent education in the National Schools of a military town, and possessing a retentive memory, he never lost what he had learnt; he writes a good hand and is well up in arithmetic. His parents dying, he was left to the care of an uncle and aunt, and at their death became friendless. He found his way up to London and was at the time I knew him getting his living by shoe-blacking and cleaning knives at a coffee-house. We induced him to bring his money to the Penny Bank, and with a little advice from a gentleman friend how to lay it out to the best advantage, in a few months he began to look tidy. He then thought he should like very much to get into a situation. He heard of one at a milliner's, and applied for it. The lady asked who could give him a character; he said his Sunday School teacher would speak for him. I called, told her what I knew of the lad, and she very kindly decided to give him a trial. He stayed with her nine months, giving, I believe, entire satisfaction. The failure of her business obliged him to leave, but, having obtained a good character, another situation was easily and quickly procured for him in a respectable establishment, where he is treated by his master with kindness and consideration. He still attends my Sunday Class and our Evening School."

REFUGES.

The six institutions in my districts have 338 inmates. Their management is excellent; the young people are well cared for, and they seem very happy; they are trained to habits of cleanliness and industry; the boys gain con-

siderable knowledge of certain handicrafts, such as tailoring, shoe-making, and mat-making; the girls get good domestic training. Moreover, good attention is paid to the imparting of secular and religious knowledge.

Queen Street during the past year collected by invitation 150 homeless boys, to whom they gave a good supper; the details, which are very interesting, are given in the March number of our magazine.

George Yard Shelter gave a night's lodging to 624 applicants.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

In my districts there are 60 of these. Many of the children display great expertness with the needle. The advantages of these classes are manifest in the very tidy appearance of the children, and are especially felt by them in the warm under-garments which many of them obtain by their own industry, conjoined with the benevolence of some kind friends who furnish the material.

During the past year Carr Street held their first Industrial Exhibition. The credit of this is due to Mr. Thomas Scrutton, who takes so lively an interest in these schools. 120 of the children exhibited. Nichol Street was first in the field in these local School Exhibitions, and repeated theirs last year with very good effect. The Working Class Exhibition held at the Agricultural Hall is noticeable on account of the Ragged School Court to which 700 or 800 of our children contributed as many as 1,000 articles. 36 of these exhibitors were selected as entitled to the prizes so kindly given by this Committee; and as a memento of the Exhibition each of the other children received a copy of *Our Children's Magazine*, also kindly given by this Committee. The highest prize was an Illustrated Bible, given by the Council of the Exhibition.

FLOWER SHOWS

Were held at Ferdinand Place, Rufford's Buildings, Elder Walk, by Lamb and Flag, for the fifth time, and by several schools conjointly in the east of London—Shadwell Railway, Ratcliff Square, Buck's Row, &c. Most of the plants exhibited had come from the Parks. It is a pleasant sign to find that these innocent shows are on the increase. Light and air are needed for these children of beauty, and hence the lesson that light and air are necessary to ensure vigorous human life. Besides, the love of beauty, so pure as connected with the floral world, may, through Divine teaching, become a stairway to lead to Him who is essential beauty because he is essential holiness.

OLD SCHOLARS' MEETINGS.

These interesting gatherings are on the increase. Lamb and Flag and Hoxton held their first during the past year.

CHOLERA.

During the year London, and especially the East of London, has been taught the necessity of obedience to physical laws. Pure air and pure water, with a proper supply of wholesome food, have been shown in a very terrible way to be indispensable to the life of the people.

The note of alarm that was raised at the prospect of the cholera invasion was caught by this Society, and a circular was forthwith prepared under the direction of a member of this Committee, and circulated among all the Ragged Schools of London. Medicine was also furnished under the same direction to all the schools that applied for it. Through it, in many cases, the disease was arrested in its preliminary stage.

Some of our schools became conspicuous for services rendered. A portion of the premises of Nichol Street and Elder Walk were used as dispensaries, and kept open night and day. Little Denmark Street was used for a cholera hospital. Nichol Street employed their missionary and an assistant to visit the homes of the sick, and with the funds at their disposal, amounting to £214 13s. 9d., supplied medicine, nourishments, and articles of bedding where needed. £75 of the fund was obtained from the Mansion House Committee. £139 13s. 9d. was raised by Union Chapel, Islington. Albert Street, situated in the heart of the attacked district, did great service. One of the teachers told me that when the disease smote some of their children the first night afterwards he could get no sleep, and at the very earliest opportunity waited on Mr. H. R. Williams, the Secretary, and obtained his consent to the formation of a Visiting Committee. He kindly placed some funds in his hand for immediate distribution. From that school issued forth a small but noble band of young men, who visited the homes of the sick and the dying. Mr. Williams visited the district himself, and has published, in the form of a letter, some most interesting details.

The Albert Street Report states that they visited 342 houses, containing 1,100 families, of whom 340 suffered from cholera and diarrhœa, 45 dying of cholera and 8 of diarrhœa. To these were distributed, mainly through funds supplied by the Mansion House Committee, 1,449lbs. of mutton and beef, 693lbs. of rice, 628lbs. of potatoes, 414lbs. of bread, 79 gallons of milk, 23 gallons of beef-tea, 20½ gallons of port, 7½ gallons of brandy, 56lbs. of arrowroot, 65lbs. of sugar, 310 yards of flannel, 265 yards of calico, and 58 blankets, besides beds and bedding, and upwards of 280 various garments and £42 in cash, together with dinners to more than 1,000 of the most destitute of the children.

In connection with Poplar, Mrs. Parker was the good angel; all the sick in connection with the school were visited by her, dispensing some private funds placed at her disposal, and recommending cases to the Relief Committee, which in every instance were kindly attended to. Ten of the school children died of the disease.

George Yard dispensed upwards of 500 doses of medicine among the children. The sick children were supplied with nourishments and comforts. 12 scholars died.

Charles Street East.—In the district connected with this school there were 250 cases of cholera and diarrhœa, and 70 deaths.

During the epidemic nearly 3,000 dinners were sent out, and the children at the school had dinner twice a week. Stratford, Ernest Street, Mile End, and Northey Street, Limehouse, were also conspicuous as seats of the malady. They were kindly benefited by a donation kindly given through Mr. Mounstephen. The money was given to the most necessitous of those families that had suffered by cholera. Mr. Morell, of Stratford, who had a

portion of this money, gives details of the cases he visited. Mr. Isaacs, master of the Ragged School, Ratcliff Square, supplies also most interesting details.

In addition to the schools already mentioned as having given dinners to the children last year must be added those of Brewer's Court, Clare Market, Pell Street, and George Yard. George Yard, last year, gave 30,000 meals of rice and soup, 14,600 rations of bread. Upwards of 600 jugs of soup were sent out to the sick and famishing. Field Lane is also conspicuous in such matters, but I have not the details. There are Soup Kitchens at Charles Street, Ferdinand Place, and Little Coram Street. Many other schools give tickets for soup to the very needy children. Fox Court has a Visiting Committee. The neighbourhood is portioned into districts, and each visitor is appointed to watch the wants of 10 or 12 families.

PENNY BANKS.

Of these there are 52, with 8,645 depositors, and 43 Clothing Clubs. The Hoxton School has a Farthing and Halfpenny Bank managed by the master. The money is taken every day in the week, while the school is assembling. The master gives the following interesting particulars:—Number of depositors, 85; amount deposited, £21 1s. 7½d.; withdrawn between January and December 9th, £9 16s. 5d.; at Christmas, £11 5s. 2½d. The money was applied in the following manner:—For 15 pairs of boots, 7 pairs of shoes, 10 jackets, 12 pairs of trousers, 6 pairs of stockings, 5 new caps, 3 comforters, for Christmas pudding 3s. 4d. One boy earned 16s. on Saturdays, taking out goods. This was applied in the purchase of clothing. Another boy saved 9s. 2½d. in farthings; he bought fruit with it to sell at Christmas. There were 15 withdrawals for repairing of boots, and 3 boys were compelled to withdraw for want of food.

MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

There are 52 of these useful gatherings, with an average attendance of upwards of 1,300. Crosskey Court has added one, and Clare Market has resumed. The Mothers' Meeting of New Nichol Street has on the books 130; average attendance, 90.

BANDS OF HOPE.

There are 20 of these, with 1,400 members. Mr. Duff, of Hatfield Street, reports that very many of the elder scholars have largely benefited by the one in connection with their school.

RESULTS.

As regards these, it may be said that the number who take Ragged School Union prizes, and the large number going out year by year to fill useful situations, are the patent evidences of our labours.

Brunswick Street states that 15 of their boys were employed by that useful institution, the Shoe-black Brigade (red), and 4 others in the Islington Shoe-black Brigade. The little school of Whetstone Park, since the beginning of the

year, has had 26 boys, chiefly orphans, employed in the Shoe-black Brigade (red), and within the last 5 years 87 have been so employed, 51 of whom were orphans. The details of some of these cases are most interesting.

As aids to usefulness mention must be made of Penny Readings, which are on the increase. These present a better and counter attraction to places of low and ribald amusement. Children are encouraged also to partake of wholesome intellectual food.

It is not possible, in the space of a single Report, to particularize all the efforts, nor enumerate all the great results of the year. Very many cases are only known to the teachers of a particular class, and never as a record see the light. I very much wish that more pains were taken to preserve the many interesting cases that are continually occurring. The master of Chicksand Street keeps a log-book, in which he enters anything remarkable connected with his school. I should like to see the example followed.

Mrs. Parker relates a very quaint remark during one of her visits. A poor boy said, "Mother! it is the kindness that licks us." The Secretary of Camden Street states that through a Prayer Meeting established in the past year 3 have given themselves to Christ. Whetstone Park records 2 happy deaths. Miss Lloyd, of Crosskey Court, reports the conversion of several of her children, and so also does Colchester Street. The year has been a most laborious one to many institutions. They have been tried by a great emergency, and have not been found wanting. There has not, on the whole, been any flagging, but rather an increase of energy, for which let us thank God and take courage.

PAID TEACHERS' EXCURSION.

On July 6th the paid teachers of the affiliated Ragged Schools were, for the third time, invited by the Committee of the Ragged School Union to spend a day with them in Bushey Park. In addition to many members of the Central Committee and the officials, about 250 paid teachers were present, including some who have been Ragged School teachers for upwards of 20 years. The bulk, indeed, we recognised as having passed at least an apprenticeship in this part of God's vineyard, and the majority, we are glad to know, regard labour among the outcast or destitute children who form the staple of Ragged Schools as their life-work. To those who, like ourselves, are brought into daily intercourse with paid Ragged School teachers, it is needless to say that the bulk view their work as much a missionary work as if they laboured among the cannibals of the Fejee Islands. In fact, our opinion is that an unconverted paid teacher—even if prompted by philanthropy and not by mercenary motives—would be quite out of place in a work so essentially evangelistic. We are glad, then, to know, from many years' experience, that the bulk of our paid teachers delight to speak of Jesus, not from mere hearsay, but because they have personally tasted his grace. Thus, whilst they do all they can to civilize the offscourings of this great Babel, their great aim is to aid Jesus in filling heaven. It is this which, during the cholera invasion last year, made so many visit the dying beds, and minister to the spiritual and bodily need of their scholars, more especially in the miles of misery in the far east. And it is this yearning for souls which causes them

to labour untiringly in fœtid "slums," fever-haunts, and crime-gardens, if haply they may lead some youth to Jesus.

It was in testimony of the value set on their labours by the Central Society that this renewed excursion was given. Need we say how our fellow-labourers enjoyed this "out"? or that they did "ample justice," as the penny-a-liners say, to the feast provided? What with criticising the Hampton Court Gallery, boating, croqueting, fishing, and other agreeables ending in "ing," the day wore away right pleasantly. A hearty vote of thanks was given to the Committee of the Ragged School Union, on the motion of one who has been a Ragged School teacher for 26 years, and seconded by another who began his labours 25 years ago. We are sure that in this hot-pressure age it is well for the mind to rest sometimes, or rather to find its needful rest in entire change of pursuit. If the wear and tear of London life causes so much havoc to the physical system of hand-workers and brain-workers generally, how much greater exhaustion it must cause in those who labour day by day, and some night after night, in the fever districts of London! But by occasionally breathing the pure ozone and seeing this world as God made it before man spoilt it with bricks and mortar, our paid teachers are rendered all the fitter for their onerous duties. Nor do we doubt that beneath the grand old chestnut trees and quiet glades of Bushey our friends gathered many an illustration which will colour their future lessons, and so give renewed tone to their teachings.

Notices of Meetings.

NICHOL STREET.

THE anniversary of this school was celebrated on June 12th by a social gathering in Myddelton Hall, Islington.

After prayer had been offered by the Rev. Dr. Mullens, the Rev. H. Allon said this was the annual meeting of the Nichol Street Schools, but it was somewhat more than that. They met to celebrate the extinction of the debt on the completed building. The lecture-room and schools had been erected at considerable cost. Through the enterprising and strenuous efforts of the teachers and superintendents, the entire debt had been liquidated. The meeting had to thank God, and to thank those to whose efforts they owed this result. But the success which had to be acknowledged with thankfulness was only to be taken as a basis for yet further exertions. A larger amount of subscriptions and donations was needed. There was a debt of £50 on the current expenses of the school.

The Report stated that the year gone by, remarkable for changes in all directions, had left its mark deeply on the neighbourhood through the ravages of fever and cholera. During the prevalence of the latter scourge, the Committee arranged for a regular supply of suitable medicine to be given to all comers at the school, and some will never forget the excited and anxious crowd that gathered round the dispensary day after day. Bedding, clothing, food, and stimulants were also provided, and in all the sum of £220 was disbursed in relieving the necessities of the neighbourhood. The average attendance had been 137, taught by 11 teachers, against about 100 last year. The Sunday Afternoon School had made considerable advance during the year, and, contrary to previous experience, had maintained itself almost up to the highest numbers of the winter time through the summer. The average attendance had been 463 against 340 last year; of teachers 27 against 24

last year. The senior classes of young men and women had now the advantage of separate rooms, and showed by their large attendance (sometimes over 30 in each) how much they valued the hour's Bible study on Sunday afternoon. The Sunday Evening School, having had the greatest attendance in the past, showed the largest increase of any of the departments of the schools. The 330 children and 21 teachers of last year had grown into 646 children and 28 teachers. With this great advance of children—far greater in proportion than the advance in the number of teachers, though here they had much to be thankful for—it would have been no cause of surprise if they had had to admit a falling off in the order and control of the school; but, thanks to the convenience and fitness of the school buildings, the reverse had been the case. At the Week Evening Schools, held four evenings in the week, the attendance had averaged 284 children and 19 teachers against 213 children and 16 teachers. In the Day School there were 500 children on the book, and the average attendance was 309. The Industrial Sewing Class had continued with great success; the girls seemed delighted to come, often in almost larger numbers than their conductors could manage. The Penny Bank had during the year received from 490 depositors £180 2s. 7d. Last year there were 469 depositors, who paid in £223 19s. 6d. The Flower Show and Children's Industrial Exhibition was a great success, and had determined the Committee to make it an annual institution. The Mothers' Meeting had been carried on with increased success during the year. The attendance throughout the winter had ranged from 70 to 80, and many of the mothers had expressed themselves grateful for the kindness shown them. In conclusion, the Report stated that the liquidation of the debt upon the building had been accomplished by the assistance of friends in all parts of the country.

The income amounted to £277 5s. 3d. The erection of lecture-room and schools cost £4,312 16s. 10d.

MILTON YARD.

At the eleventh annual meeting of this school, recently held, the Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The Report said that on the establishment of the school in 1856, the attendance ranged from 15 to 20 per evening; removed in 1857 to more commodious premises, it rose to an average of 30; enlarged in 1862, the Committee were enabled to record an average evening attendance of 62 in the winter months. Great as this increase was, it has been surpassed; for in 1866 the school registers show the encouraging figures now submitted, viz., boys enrolled during the year, 350, with a summer average evening attendance of 73, and a winter attendance of 95 per evening. The Boys' Sunday Night School has been carried on during the year. The Penny Bank is another much valued agency, and the increasing deposits prove that the boys begin to understand the position they obtain by having a balance at their bankers. The Lending Library may be considered the new feature of the year. By the kindness of several book societies, publishers, and other friends, 400 volumes have been collected, and are much in demand amongst the more intelligent of the elder girls and boys. Again, during the year many of the boys have been assisted in obtaining employment, 56 having been provided for in various ways.

Much and sad distress prevailing among the parents of the boys and girls in the severe weather at the close of the year, an appeal was made by the Committee for aid to alleviate some of the suffering so prominently brought under their notice. By the kindness of the editors of several daily newspapers in giving publicity to this, a sum of about £35 was raised, thus enabling temporary provision to be made for nearly 200 families, numbering in all 1,100 individuals.

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. T. Green, J. Rooker, D. Wilson, and Messrs. Harvey, Charles, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

LIFE IN A GROTTO.

We are not about to introduce our readers to the celebrated Grotto of Pope, nor yet to the grotto which an industrious pensioner carved out of the cliff of Dover as his house. Unlike these, the Grotto which we intend to describe is a moral and not merely a material one. Yet, nevertheless, our Grotto is adorned with many lustrous gems dug out of the soul-mine, once almost hidden by dirt and mire, but which by-and-bye will become precious stones in the diadem of the King of Kings. It is, then, the early life of the lads who compose the Refuge in Grotto Passage, Marylebone, that we propose to describe; many of these being boys whose history would form a tale which some novelists would fear to relate lest they should be charged with exaggeration. For the dictum of Lord Byron is still true, "Truth is strange—stranger than fiction."

The history of these lads, like that of all other inmates of Refuges, is necessarily a chequered one. If, as inmates, they are not all black, neither are they all white; nor can this excite any wonder, when it is remembered that our Refuges are constantly recruited by those whose only prior education had been found in the streets, and whose home—when it was not in the jail—was either in the low lodging-house of the Mint, or in casual wards. The wonder rather is that, instead of "black sheep" forming a small percentage of this family, there should be any who by steady industry and moral reform amply repay the kindness of the managers.

In order to show the staple composing the inmates of our Grotto, and to indicate something of what is implied by poor-boy life in great cities, we shall briefly relate two cases of boys who have been rescued from a life of sin and sorrow. Thus X. had been for above two years a wanderer; he had slept in every "lump" [casual ward] in London, and about thirty in the country, from the outhouses at E——, where "they give you no toke [bread] at all, and they sleep on the bare ground without a cover, to the one at Lincoln, where every one can have as much bread and milk as they can eat." His

companions had been always the worst. Their language was usually profane, if not terrible. He had only once seen a man pray. He had been drawn by bad companions to racecourses, where he was taught to get his living in the worst ways. X. never heard a good word except from Richard Weaver, whose words and hymns sounded in his ears when he had forgotten all else. He carried a hymn-book in his pocket mixed up with cheating cards till it was worn out. He sank lower and lower; but the still small voice at last prevailed, and, sick of his evil ways, he sought a new life, heard of this Refuge from a friend, and now says, "Bless God for in 'The Grotto,' for it's been the means of saving me."

Z. tramped from Gloucestershire to find work. In a starving state he knocked at a door to ask for bread; the landlady, struck by his haggard face, sent him to the Grotto, where he soon doubled in size, and now earns his own living. In addition, he became the Poet Laureate of "The Grotto."

That the toil and expense entailed by the Grotto and other Refuges have been more than repaid many facts testify. In nothing is the change of the reformed inmates more noticeable than in the facial expression. They enter our Refuges with sullen, downcast, furtive glance, as if they feared a detective was watching their movements. Sometimes, too, the expression is that of a beaten hound, rather than that of a lad just entering the vestibule of life, vivacious and hopeful. But, after a few weeks, the weary, sullen, or sly look vanishes as if by magic, and is replaced by an open, affectionate countenance, such as seems to say, in the words of one of our boys, "I can look any peeler in the face now, teacher." Mr. Collier, the Hon. Superintendent, has a photographic gallery of these boys, taken before and after their reception, and so strange is the difference between what they *were* and what they *are*, that visitors often doubt whether they are looking at the same lads.

But to confine ourselves to present or recent inmates, to show their strange histories. One, a fine lad, is from the far North in Scotland. Near him stands an orphan (which most of them are), the keeper of the pets, and himself a favourite, who tramped from the West of England to find work. He became the keeper of the guinea pigs, of whose antics they are not a little proud. We never visit the connected Ragged School without one of their number bringing this message, "Won't you see the pigs, sir, before you leave?" A third came from the wilds of Ireland. He was a help

and stay by his good example to the boys, for whose sake he declined a good situation he might have taken. Near him stood an emaciated, stunted lad, who has scarce known any home but the dens of London. He earned a bare subsistence by selling birds; but his attention being drawn away, his birds were all stolen, and his means of living were gone. Just after him, half starved and ill with fever, another was admitted, who had arrived with a widowed mother from India, "Mother died, and I did'nt know nobody." For a whole year he had no certain dwelling-place for two nights in succession. More strange than most is the history of a boy, who though English was born in Paris. He was taken into the service of a slave-driver to South America, from which country, after many wild adventures, he returned and finally landed at the Grotto. So varied are the wanderings of these waifs and strays, that there have been inmates who spoke German, French, and Spanish, as fluently as their mother tongue.

Last Christmas, in accordance with an annual custom, all the inmates of the Grotto, past and present, were invited to dinner. Nearly forty were present. After the monster pudding had disappeared, revivalistic hymns of their own selection were sung with thrilling earnestness. General conversation followed, and each related the place where he had spent last Christmas. Among these were the following:—1. "Up a tree reconnoitering for the enemy." 2. "In the East Indies." 3. "In a bog." 4. "Off the Bargee Islands." 5. "In a storm at sea." 6. "In a billy-boy." 7. "With a slave-driver." 8. "In the Indies." 9. "In a lump' [casual ward]. Two from Scotland, two from Ireland, and some from nearly every county in England met at this strange party. One from America was the hero of the evening, for he had been in twenty-one battles, and the adventures of his campaign struck his hearers with wonder.

Such is life in the Grotto in its gala dress. But now for its working, or daily dress; for the great aim of the managers is not to *pet*, or in other words, to unfit the inmates for every-day life, but to teach the outcast or the destitute how to win their bread honestly. That these lads are no idlers, the following list of work done last year will testify:—Bundles of wood tied, 116,000; horse-hair picked, 19,706 lbs.; pairs of boots made, 10; pairs of boots repaired, 324; mats made, 137; brushes made, 229; articles of clothing repaired, 494; mattrasses milled, 103; bass brooms made, 5; truck loads of wood drawn, 355.

After scanning this photograph of life in a grotto, can we withhold thanks to the Father of the Fatherless, who anointed the workers for their moral crusade? Our prayer, then, is, that God may raise up many more such labourers in Christ's vineyard in all parts of Great Britain, who shall be enabled, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to rescue many perishing ones from the festering whirlpool of society.

THE CONVERSION OF CHILDREN.

BY REV. E. PAYSON HAMMOND.

I HAVE always been struck with that verse in Luke x. 21,—"I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." This was the only place in the Bible in which our Saviour was said to have rejoiced. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and it was said that he was often seen to weep, but never to smile.

Children in Israel were called babes till they were three years old. I have made it a point to study the Bible with regard to the conversion of children, and I am satisfied that when Jesus spoke of children coming to himself, and where he received them to himself, they were born again by the Spirit of God. A few years ago I should not have been prepared to receive that statement, but now I fully believe that little children, as young as three years of age, are often born again by the Spirit of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The great Jonathan Edwards had narrated in his book "On Surprising Conversions" the conversion of Phœbe Bartlett when not four years of age, and regarded it as no impeachment of his caution, of his penetration, of his wisdom, of his conservatism, to publish while she was living a full detailed account of this conversion. Phœbe Bartlett lived a long and consistent life, and evinced that she was truly a child of God. Some reader has, perhaps, seen a book written by Horace Bushnell, called "Christian Nurture," the one leading idea of which was that children ought to be taught the way of salvation through Christ when so young that they should never know the time when they were not Christians. I agree with the theory of the book entirely, though it is somewhat startling. One reason why I am satisfied that the thing is possible, is that in travelling over the world I have everywhere found that there were some who had been led to Christ when so young that they had never been able to tell the time when they did not love him. I would say, God bless those mothers who taught their children in their infancy, so that they learn to love Jesus and trust Jesus almost as early as they loved their mothers and trusted them. I thank God that he had given a man the boldness to write such a book. A great many, however, had misunderstood Dr. Bushnell entirely, and stated that he taught in that book that there was no necessity for conversion, and that if children were brought up well, they would develop into Christians. I once had a conversation with Dr. Bushnell, in which he said, "Far be it from

me to teach that children, however young, need no regeneration by the Holy Spirit of God. My simple object was to impress upon Christians the advantage of holding up Jesus in such a simple way that little children should feel their hearts drawn towards him from the very first." There was a story told of a little child whose father was in India. The father had gone away when the child was a little baby, but the mother continually taught him about his father, read him letters, showed him pictures, and the little boy felt his heart drawn out in love to the father. What was the result? Why, when the father came home one day unexpectedly, the little boy ran to him, threw his arms round him, and called him "dear papa," although he had never before seen him. Why should not children be taught in the same way about Jesus, who had loved them far more than their fathers or mothers ever loved them, so that in early childhood they should be enabled to say, "Whom, having not seen, we love, in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

But what were the facts? Were children in large numbers led to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in very early childhood, at three, four, or five years of age? The fact was, on the contrary, that the majority of the children in our Sunday Schools had not been led to the Cross in early childhood. The majority of ministers and Christians thought that from fourteen to nineteen was the best age for conversion, and that, if young people were then converted, there was more probability of its being a sound and genuine conversion. He believed that children everywhere, the world over, could be led to Jesus if Christians could believe it, and work for it, and use the simple God-appointed means—namely, Christ and him crucified, held up in such a manner that the little children should see and feel that he was "wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities." That was all that was needed. When he had first seen children in large numbers professedly led to Christ, he was just as sceptical as anybody else could be; but he had always loved children, and delighted to be with them, and tried to teach them about Jesus; and he had taken a great deal of pains in watching them. He had travelled many miles, and written many letters expressly to see whether children who, one, two, three, four, five, six, or seven years ago said that they had found Jesus, had held out in that; and his faith every day had been strengthened with regard to the conversion of children and the possibility of any man who loved Christ leading many children to Jesus. I will mention one fact. In the city of Rochester, United States, a few years ago, God was pleased to pour out his Holy Spirit. Christians all united in praying and labouring for the salvation of children. They put away their sins, they humbled themselves in the dust, they prayed God to save young and old, rich and poor. Ministers of all denominations stood side by side on the same platform; and after Jesus had been held up, they went right down among the children and talked with them. Many who were entirely unimpressed by what was said on the platform were awakened by what Christian teachers and ministers said to them personally. It was officially reported at the State Sunday School Convention that 1,001 in that city from the Sabbath School alone were received into the churches, many of them children as young as nine and ten years of age; and now, after four years, the ministers testified that they were holding out still. I might mention

facts which had come under my own observation where children in large numbers had been born again by the Spirit of God, and had, years after, given the most satisfactory evidence of a changed heart. In the city of Buffalo it was my privilege to spend a few days in addressing children. Two gentlemen came to me and said they had a large school in the suburbs of the city, and asked me to come and address the children. I told them that I could not, but added that God would bless them just the same in my absence if they would only work and pray. I advised them just for once to put the ordinary exercises aside, and let some person get up and take the Bible and read the story of Christ's sufferings till those children not merely knew, but saw and felt, that the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the miracles which he wrought, proved that he was Divine, at last died a dreadful death, that children as well as grown people might be saved. I promised that I would pray for them. They went away and acted upon my advice, and afterwards came back to tell me of the wonderful blessing which had resulted from their labouring in faith.

Referring to the kind of books that were usually published, I will mention a fact which, if the bookmakers were not already possessed of it, might be worth their listening to. Many and many a time when I have been travelling about I have said, "My little fellow, why are not you a Christian?" and the answer was, "I'm afraid if I become a Christian I'll die." "Why?" "Because in all the books that I've read about little children who become Christians, they have all died; and I don't want to die." Jonathan Edwards had dared to talk about a little girl who became a Christian and did not die, and we ought all to try to teach our children that they were no more apt to die when they become converted than before; I believe they would, on the contrary, be more likely to live. How many young men in London, if they loved the Lord Jesus in youth, would have been saved from dens of infamy and vice, and a premature death!

In confirmation of the above remarks, which are the substance of an impressive address delivered by Mr. Hammond before the Sunday School Union, our friend Colonel Griffin, of Chicago, said that he could testify to the truth of that which he had uttered, through the testimony which he had received of those whom he had known and loved for many years. But it needed no stronger testimony on his behalf than this one fact, that, through him and his labours, he (Colonel Griffin) owed, under God, the conversion of two of his own dear boys, who were now rejoicing in the Saviour they had found. In the city of Rochester Mr. Hammond laboured with the little ones, and God so blessed the work that no less than 1,001 of the little boys and girls were added to the various churches. At a meeting of ministers, one whom he knew well stood up, and stated that, so far as he had been able to learn, there was scarcely one out of those 1,001 children who had failed to walk, during the past four years, worthy of the high vocation to which they were called. This was testimony which was worth listening to—testimony which he would desire every one present should believe and act upon—that these precious little ones might not only be brought to Jesus, but that, after having thus been brought, they might remain as steadfast and true as those of older years.

YOUTH IN WORKHOUSES.

We are frequently asked this question—Why, when the bulk of Ragged scholars have such bad parents, and such squalid homes, we prefer to gather them into Ragged Schools rather than to see them transferred to workhouses, where they would be well housed, well fed, and, if of fitting age, be educated by trained teachers? That their physical wants would be better attended to than can possibly be the case in the fever-dens of our great cities there can be no doubt. But it must not be forgotten that man is something more than an animal, and thus has soul-wants which must be regarded, if he is to be fitted to do his duty to God and man. It is this which leads us to prefer the Ragged School to the workhouse, however more complete the latter may be in machinery. For we have found, from long experience, that if any of our scholars leave us for the workhouse, for any length of time, that on their return to the Ragged School they have become so deteriorated in morals and manners as to make them a most difficult class to control. Instead of finding them the docile, loving, and frank children which they were when they left the Ragged School, they have become rebellious, sullen, foul in language and action, and utterly unmanageable; in fact, they so contaminate the whole school as to render their very presence a kind of moral poison; the evil influence of which, from the exciteable nature of the Ragged class, it is not easy to estimate. We have known such girls, who were once broken in, return from the workhouse so corrupt as to require their instant expulsion from the Ragged School, if the teacher would preclude the ruin of other children. The infliction of this penalty was painful; but, like the excision of a putrifying limb, it was the only means of saving the body from death.

This painful fact, indeed, is confirmed by the majority of those who have engaged workhouse girls as domestic servants. No girls are so defiant, dogged, and coarse in utterance or action as these; so that all who value home comfort are compelled, however much disposed to aid the needy, to give up a struggle with vices which, if not inherent in the class, are developed in the workhouse. It is this fact, too, which causes so many workhouse girls to roam our streets thoroughly lost to all virtue, for employers are afraid to receive the bulk into their houses.

From these and similar facts we are led to infer that, as at present conducted, workhouse training consists either in non-education or in bad education. And so long as these evils are permitted to exist, we must prefer to see even the half-starved child in our Ragged Schools, where at least he will be taught how to live so as not to fear death when it comes. But, besides this, he may there acquire such habits of decency, civility, and industry, as to find ready acceptance in the labour market when of age to earn his bread by "the sweat of his face."

The causes of these evils, and, what is still better, one of the *remedies*, are thus indicated by the *Parochial Critic*. It says that—

"One of the greatest blots in our workhouse system is its promiscuous bringing together of characters who would probably not be there if they were models of perfection. It was an excellent idea to draught off the

children into district schools, in order to withdraw them from this contamination. There the children are well trained, and have every chance of acquiring principles and habits which will enable them afterwards to become independent of the parish, and the parish of them. But it is evil in the extreme when their time is ended at the district schools, and they cannot be apprenticed or otherwise disposed of, they are obliged to be sent to mingle with the common gang in the workhouse. There, in the course of a few weeks, is undone the labour of years of training. The contact of their young and tender minds with characters of every description is terribly demoralizing. Young girls, especially, who entered the workhouse bearing on their foreheads the stamp of modesty and innocence, become utterly changed, sometimes in the course of a single week. The air of modesty, docility, and candour gives place to that bold, impudent, and defiant look that too surely denotes the corruption that has come over the mind and heart. The very institution established for their benefit thus becomes the means of blasting them for ever. This is an evil that calls out for prompt remedy in the interests of morality, the well-being of society, and the good of the parish itself.

"Those who take this matter to heart, will rejoice to hear that the remedy is not only feasible, but easy of adoption, and that a parish that has hitherto been famous for its mismanagement is on the point of adopting it. Mr. Wyatt, J.P., at the last meeting of the Board of Guardians of St. Pancras, brought before the notice of the guardians that there are societies in London who make it their business to board and lodge young girls, so as to keep them as far as possible from evil companionship; 4s. per week only is charged by these societies, while their cost at the workhouse is 5s. 6d. He therefore moved that the girls should be transported from the workhouse to the care of these societies. The idea was gladly embraced by the guardians, and application is to be made to the Poor Law Board for permission to make the transfer. The Poor Law Board will, doubtless, be only too glad to advance a measure which will tend to sever these young people for ever from the workhouse, and its associations of poverty, unthrift, and vice."

HOWARD MISSION, NEW YORK.

In our number for January last (*ante* p. 11) we gave an epitome of the work carried on and the good effected in New York by the Howard Mission. We now turn from retrospect to the plans of future work.

The new property of the Howard Mission has a front of 104 feet and a depth of 137 feet. The ground was purchased for £7,500, and in view of the steady improvement of that part of the town, cannot fail to be a good investment. In fact, the Howard Mission itself will soon pay for its property, as the Five Points House of Industry has done, by the rise in value which its presence and operations effect.

The piece of ground is to be covered with buildings, adequate for the accommodation of 1,000 children, built on the characteristic plan of the Mission—not a shilling of debt. The first building, now about ready for the

roof, and of course paid for, so far, is to be devoted to divine worship, instruction, and recreation. The dimensions are 50 by 80 feet, filling half of Roosevelt Street front. The schlolars' entrance is in Roosevelt Street, and the visitor's entrance will be through the main hall of the Mission House on New Bowery, conducting to the platform of the chapel. The entire first-floor will be a play and exercise room, 13½ feet high, well lighted and aired, where gymnastics, games, &c., may be carried on at all hours, instead of in the street; an efficient as well as attractive missionary operation in itself, to draw in the little *gamins* from the gutters, and give them an elementary new idea or two to start with. Until the other buildings are ready, however, this room will be used as a school-room, while the basement will be temporarily occupied for the kitchen and the dining-room.

The chapel, over the play-room, will be a very handsome, cheerful, and lofty hall, 50 by 80 feet, 35 feet in extreme height, amply lighted from the front, the roof, and one side. A gallery 20 feet deep extends across the front end, and a platform, recessed and arched, occupies the opposite end. In this room will be held the Sunday School, and also a Week-day School. The worst of it is that this spacious chapel will often be hardly equal to *one* of the two crowds—natives and visitors—that will want to get into it from the opposite doors.

The general purposes of these future buildings are as follows:—1. Refuge for "little wanderers," while awaiting and preparing for new homes in the country. 2. Reception of applications for children and fitting out of parties for the promised land. (It should be remembered that no children are "bound out," or sent to situations in a menial capacity, but full membership in the family is required for all.) 3. Lodgings for the homeless and poor, especially for girls out of place, and without proper abodes. 4. Workrooms for temporary employment. 5. Public Laundry, where poor women may wash and iron for themselves or others. 6. Public Nursery, where poor mothers may leave their infants while at work. 7. Hospital, dispensary, and medical attendance for the sick poor, especially children and the numerous inmates of the Institution. This is found the more necessary from the insufficiency or inefficiency of the City medical provision for the poor; cases being sometimes not attended to under two days. 8. Special provision for children's play in pure air and under wholesome influences. 9. Week-day and Sunday Schools. 10. Public worship, and social religious meetings in the evenings of the week.

The arrangement of the buildings yet to be commenced will be something like the following:—The remaining 54 feet on Roosevelt Street will be filled to a depth of about 45 feet, with a building mainly intended for industrial purposes, to include the public laundry and nursery, lodging-house, and work-rooms. Back of a part of this building, and forming an L with it, is to be a building 44 by 26 feet, devoted to school-rooms, shut in from noise, and lighted from the inner court. Next, on New Bowery, and extending in the rear of adjoining buildings on that street, are to be the mission-rooms, offices, and family establishment. This building, fronting 85 feet on New Bowery, and turning with an angle so as to extend 45 feet in the rear of the adjoining property on the same street, will be spacious, though not very deep, and in addition to the purposes above mentioned will have room for a goodly num-

ber of perhaps more select lodging-rooms; while the upper story, 15 feet in the clear and some 130 feet in extreme length, is to be the hospital. The roof will be solidly built, surrounded with a strong high balustrade, and appropriated for air and exercise to the little patients and convalescents.

The cost of completing these plans is estimated at £35,000. As 1,000 children will be accommodated, £35, in Mr. Van Meter's way of putting it, will endow a perpetual Refuge for any "little wanderer" as long as the walls shall stand. Why not "number" the 1,000 accommodations, and allow the name of each patron to be inscribed *in memoriam*—perhaps with a simple card-portrait—upon each chair or over each bed, which he has instituted by a gift of £35. Those who dislike the publicity may none the less be commemorated as anonymous givers, and perhaps quite as effectively, with their photograph but without their name, or even without either portrait or name.

"WORK FOR CHRIST."

THESE were the last words that fell from the lips of young Alexander M'Kee, who died in New York a few months ago. For long weary months he had been the victim of consumption, the disease that so often selects the loveliest and the noblest for its prey. He could not go forth to toil for Christ in the church or the mission-school, but he glorified his Master on a bed of pain, for—

"They also serve, who only stand and wait."

He waited patiently, prayerfully, and humbly. When the invisible chariot bore him away out of our sight, he left us a parting motto, that all of us would do well to remember.

"*Work for Christ.*" This is the work that yields the sweetest solace and the richest revenue of reward. It has the promise of this world, and of the world to come. A man who works for Jesus never sees the *end* of his labours; for the seed he soweth will go on growing, scattering new seeds, and fructifying in all future time. He leaves behind him a goodly heritage of Christian deeds. The perfume of his piety lingers with his memory; there is a *trail of light* that remains long after he has passed from his bright pathway, into the pearly gate of Heaven. His labours, like his glorified soul, are immortal. In one sense, *good men never die.* They are simply transplanted. John Calvin has, indeed, long slept in his humble grave at Geneva; but his noble defence of God's sovereignty will outlive the stars. Bunyan rests in Bunhill Fields, but his bright spirit still walks the earth in the Pilgrim's Progress; John Wesley's voice is no longer speaking, but we seem to hear the echo of it in the hymns of every Methodist chapel. Howard is alive in many a prison association; Sarah Martin, in many a circle of gentle philanthropists; Clarkson, in many a league for freedom; Swartz and Mills, in many a missionary band. Their works do follow them.

"*Work for Christ.*" This is the way to secure spiritual health. The invalids and dyspeptics are not found among working Christians. Like a bracing walk up the mountain-side, or a sturdy half-day with the axe in the

forest, to ensure a good appetite, so is a busy devotion to religious duty, as a quickener of the soul's hunger after God. Work develops a man's spiritual frame. He grows strong, sinewy, broad-shouldered, to carry burdens, and swift-footed in doing good. An indolent professor becomes puny and spindling, like a lad brought up indoors to idleness. A working disciple cannot well be a *cold* disciple. Dr. Kane and his Arctic comrades only kept themselves from freezing by constant activity. And would not our frigid churches all feel a new glow of health, and a new elasticity of movement, and a new prevalence in prayer, and a new power in saving souls, if they would all adopt the watchword of the young dying saint, "*Work for Christ?*"

But whilst you "Work for Christ," never forget that all men cannot, and were never intended to, work in the same way. "There are diversities of operations." Upon the face of a watch you may see an illustration of our meaning. On that small space you have three workers; there is the second pointer performing rapid revolutions; there is the minute pointer going at a greatly reduced speed, and there is the hour pointer tardier still. Now, anyone unacquainted with the mechanism of a watch would conclude that the busy little second pointer was doing all the work; it is clicking away at sixty times the speed of the minute pointer, and as for the hour hand, *that* seems to be doing no work at all. You can see in a moment that the first is busy, and in a short time you will see the second stir; but you must wait still longer to assure yourself of the motion of the third.

So it is in the Church. There are active, fussy men, who appear to be doing the work of the whole community; and others slower still. But can we do without the minute and hour pointers? The noisy second hand might go round its little circle for ever, without telling the world the true time. But we should be thankful for all kinds of workers. The silent, steady hour-hand need not envy its noisy little colleague.

Each man must fill the measure of his capacity. Your business is to do your allotted work, so as to meet the approbation of the Master. Work, then, for Christ in the special sphere, with the specific gift accorded, whether in Ragged School, Parents' Meeting, or Ragged Church; so as at last to be able to say, "I have *finished* the work Thou gavest me to do."

CROYDON RAGGED SCHOOL.

Amongst the country Ragged Schools recently affiliated to the Ragged School Union, one of the best worked is planted in a byway of Croydon. We have visited it on several occasions, and always with pleasure; for it was evident that the managers had their hearts in the work; and thus their effort to rescue the waifs and strays of that town have not been abortive.

This Ragged School is situate in Hill Street, Old Town, a spot well selected for the purpose. On Sundays and week-days it trains for time and eternity nearly 250 scholars. They are all of the right class; and a visitor sees at a glance that the school consists of those whose parents cannot, or what is still worse, those who will not, pay a small school fee, preferring, as they do, to spend their days in idleness and their nights in the beer-shop.

This class, indeed, is the most difficult to discipline of all the component parts of a Ragged School. For the parents, both by precept and by example, strive to *undo* all the good done in the school. Yet, happily, hundreds of this class have been so trained as to become a credit to our common country.

Those whom benevolence has directed to the old town have found it to contain not only the object of their search, but one of the noblest charities this age has given birth to. True, there is no picturesque *façade* to attract, there is no pile of architectural elegance to astonish, and it requires even a little perseverance, and not a few inquiries, before you are able to find it. Although the report furnishes a good deal of the *statistical* working of the charity, it fails, for want of power, to supply all those minor details which make up the history of this Institution. It does not tell how little infants, scarcely two years old, toddle in, morning after morning, away from the squalor, and the misery and wretchedness, of what should be their home; nor does it tell how honest, hard-working parents are enabled to earn their bread while the Ragged School takes care of their little ones, and teaches them what the want of philanthropy in their parents' days made it impossible for them to know.

This school is not only educational, but industrial, for the little girls do needlework, and the boys make paper bags and print the purchaser's name upon them, getting paid for their labour. They learn with a will, and they work with a will; and with a wonderful bit of pride does the Master point to those little children who came first to him, little else than babies, and who are not much beyond that stage now, but who can read and write remarkably well. If ever there was a man fitted for his post it is the Master of the Croydon Ragged School. With his hearty smile and shining pate, he looks the village schoolmaster, the father of his flock, the man to win the little ones' love. When he spoke of the efforts they had made to keep up the Night School, he spoke of it as a "glorious" Night School, as if the fact of working his day over again was a thing to be thankful for. But he has his disappointments, and to him, whose whole soul is in the work, these disappointments are sorrows. Too many parents care less for their children than the Master of the Ragged School, and frequently are the pupils absent—kept away to help their fathers at work before they are old enough to learn how to play. Some, too, are allowed to run about the streets rather than be sent to school, so that they may be handy "to fetch the beer"!

Though the rules of the schools do not admit children of parents who can afford to pay for some sort of education, the Master exercises his discretion, and makes an exception to the children of parents whose habits of intemperance render them unfit to be the guardians of their little ones. For these the Master stretches the rule, and widens his door to squeeze through these poor little outcasts, and so saves them, body and soul, in the truest sense of the terms. Such philanthropy has been known to do double good, for the little things take home hymns and books, which, trifling in themselves, are even utterly unknown to the dissolute parents, and, by degrees, the parents are brought to listen to their childrens' efforts; and instances are known where the reformation of the parent dates from the "accidental" teaching of their ragged child.

The Master's recompense is found in the willingness and unmistakable gratitude of the children, who take delight in everything they do. "You see, sir," says the Master, "their heart is in the work." Upwards of a million paper bags are made and sold annually. All these have to be cut out by the Master, otherwise the loss in paper would be immense; and, after he has set the type, the boys work "at press" and print the customers' names and address. For this work, as we have before observed, the boys receive the proceeds—as much as £15 9s. 5d. having been paid to the boys for their labour. The sight of these "pressmen," with their hands and arms begrimed with ink and their faces too—for, as the Master adds, they would not be satisfied if they did not rub it over their faces for "amusement"—offer a capital illustration of the rudiments of labour. There is a Sunday School numerously attended—in fact, too much so, for the deficiency in teachers renders the efforts of those who volunteer for this charitable duty doubly arduous; and the Committee earnestly solicit the aid of those willing to help in the good work to take part in this labour, and so extend the benefits accruing from it.

The annual expenditure in connection with all this good is only £146 0s. 10d. Of this amount the sum of £11 3s. 10d. is *due* to the Treasurer.

The report, detailing as it does an outline of the Institution's workings, tells us what it has done, and what it yet hopes to do. It tells how, in the midst of the biting cold of last winter, the little things were warmed and fed, and how they can be clothed if people will only send the old apparel they not only do not want, but would readily get rid of. It tells all this and much more of a work well done, because done in obedience to the injunction of our common Lord, "Feed my lambs."

LITTLE JOHNNIE:

A DEATH-BED SKETCH.

Some years ago, one of the scholars in our Ragged class was little Johnnie. He and his younger sister, of whom he took most loving care, were some of the first whom we gathered. They were so regular, quiet, and eager to learn, that we soon began to love them, and watch Sabbath by Sabbath for their coming. Their parents were very poor, but tidy, honest people; and the children showed it, for their clothes were always beautifully clean and well mended.

How quickly Johnnie learned! The letters, never seen before, were play to him; and as he showed little Mary which was "Great A" and which "big, roundabout O," we longed to make him monitor to some older boys, who seemed to think learning to read an utterly hopeless task. But when the work of the short lesson was over, and the Sabbath story took its place, then Johnnie's eyes shone, his lips parted, and his cheeks glowed. The child's whole soul was in his face.

"Will you tell about Jesus to-day, teacher?"

Would you not rather hear about some one else, Johnnie?"

"Oh no! Please let it be about Jesus!" And then the little fellow would sit, his hands clasped, his eager face upturned all alive with interest, sometimes with eyes filled with tears, sometimes even laughing for gladness, until the lesson closed.

With any teacher such a scholar would be a favourite. Our interest in the children was enhanced by the fact that their parents were about to emigrate, and we knew that in all likelihood our time for sowing good seed might be short. They went sooner even than we had expected; and before they left we called and bade farewell to Johnnie's father and mother, his uncle—a fine clever lad, also one of our pupils—his little sister, and himself. We looked our last on the fair face, the waving silky air, the bright blue eyes, now dim with weeping; and commending our dear little scholar to better teaching than we could ever give him, we left the house. About two or three months after their departure, in going along the street, my attention was excited by an old woman glancing at me, and then hurrying by with her face turned away, as though anxious to avoid me. Looking after her, I recognized her as Johnnie's grandmother, whom I had once or twice met at the house, but who, being a zealous Romanist, had always kept out of my way. I followed her, and asked if she had heard anything of her daughter and the family. She had just received a letter from New York, informing her of their safe arrival. "And how were they all after their voyage?" I asked. "Did the children bear it well? How was Johnnie?"

"They were all well," she said, "and the voyage had done little Polly a world of good. But didn't you know, ma'am, about Johnnie?"

"What about Johnnie?" I rejoined.

"Oh," she said, "he never went away with the rest. He died, ma'am, more than a month ago, at my little house just by."

"At your house!" I exclaimed, "and you never sent for me, nor for Miss E——!" Then followed a long string of apologies and assertions, the drift of which I well understood. Of the child I could learn nothing, save that he had received extreme unction, and that they had given him a grand wake.

When the old woman was out of the street, I returned, and got the news I wanted from one of her neighbours. Johnnie and his friends had left for Liverpool on a cold, wet morning, and the little fellow had suffered much from the weather; so much so that, on going on board, the ship's doctor had noticed him, and said they must not on any account take him, if they had anyone to leave him with. The child was sickening with inflammation of the lungs. The grandmother was with them, and in her care they reluctantly left their darling boy, who returned with her the next day to her dwelling. A season of delirium ensued, during which Johnnie was constantly singing, telling over his favourite stories of Jesus, and entreating to see his teachers.

His grandmother and the priest plied him with crucifixes and medals of the Virgin; but of all these he seemed unconscious, only answering them with the continual request, "Won't you send for my teachers, Granny? I know they'd come to see their little Johnnie." But with the priest at her elbow, the grandmother could not, if she would, listen to his dying plea, and no teacher came to cheer Johnnie's bed of pain.

One morning after a short sleep he awoke, calm and bright, the delirium

gone. He looked round at his grandmother, and at the kind neighbour who told me all this, and who was then watching with her. "I should have liked to have seen teacher," he said; "but never mind now. Will you sing for me, Granny?"

"How can I sing, child?" said the poor old woman, weeping.

"Will you sing, please?"—to the neighbour.

"I do not know your songs, Johnnie, my boy," was the reply.

"Then I must sing," said the child. "I want to sing 'Far, far, away.'" He raised himself up on his low bed, and began:—

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away";

but his voice faltered. "No," he said, "I can't sing it, and it doesn't matter. It isn't 'far away' *now*, any more." Then the pale face flushed with sudden energy, the eye beamed, the little wasted hands were stretched towards heaven, and the clear soft voice rang through the room with the words, "I SEE JESUS!" The hands dropped, the light faded from the little face, and he sank back. They sent in haste for the priest, who came to perform the last rites of the Romish Church over his unconscious form; but Johnnie was with Him in whose presence is fulness of joy.—*Tract Magazine.*

HOMELESS BOYS AND THEIR SHIP.

A NUMBER of the supporters of the admirable and much-needed movement which has for its object the refuge and education of homeless and destitute children visited, on August 5th, the training-ship *Chichester*, lying off Greenhithe, Kent. The establishment of the *Chichester* may be partly attributed to Mr. Greenwood's Workhouse experiences. The revelations of the "Amateur Casual" induced a number of gentlemen to issue invitations to all the boys frequenting the casual wards of the various workhouses to a supper, which took place on the 14th February, 1866, under the presidency of Lord Shaftesbury. It was attended by nearly 200 of these destitute lads. After the repast, when the noble lord put the question, "If a ship were moored in the Thames how many of you would go on board?" the hands of all present were held up in the affirmative. At that time there were 100 boys in the St. Giles's Refuge, but 40 more were at once admitted, and within a week the number was increased to 60. The Committee then determined to extend their operations, and the scheme adopted was this:—1st. To retain 100 boys in the Queen Street Refuge; 2nd. To establish a training-ship for 200 more to be educated and prepared for a seafaring life; and, 3rd. To purchase a country-house with from 60 to 100 acres of land, where 100 other lads might be trained to agricultural pursuits. The last of these objects alone remains unaccomplished for want of funds; but this cannot long operate as a barrier, as one gentleman has offered £1,000 if this part of the scheme can be carried out. On the application of Lord Shaftesbury, the Lords of the Admiralty granted the Committee the hull of the *Chichester*, a 50-gun frigate, to be used as a training-ship, and allowed them to draw from the Government dockyard masts, sails, and other stores, to the value of £2,129 15s. 8d., on the express

understanding that the amount would be paid off within nine months ; but it is not expected that the Government will exact this sum.

The inauguration ceremony of the *Chichester* as a training-ship took place on the 18th of December last. (See *ante* p. 25). Fifty boys from the Refuge were at once placed on board ; but, encouraged by the gift of £1,000 from Mr. R. Fleming, they were supplemented by a like number within a few weeks.

The industrial element is an important branch in the training of these children. During the past year the earnings of these lads amounted to no less than £1,439 odd. The St. Giles's Refuges provide respectively for 44 and 46 girls, each being capable of accommodating 50, if funds permitted. The total number of children of both sexes to whom its blessings have been extended is, to the close of last year, 1,903, of which 1,193 were boys, and 710 girls. These were gathered together from all parts of the United Kingdom, from France, Italy, Belgium, the United States, Canada, and the West Indies. Out of that army 1,498 have left the Refuges for service, namely, 912 boys and 586 girls.

A special steamer took the visitors down to the *Chichester*. All that good taste and willing hands could do to receive the visitors joyfully and well had been done by the Committee, the officers on board, and the little sailors themselves. The exterior and the interior of the vessel were profusely decorated with flags, wreaths of flowers, &c. The upper deck was comfortably protected from the drizzling rain by a substantial awning, underneath which the 113 comfortably-clad and cheerful-looking embryo seamen disported themselves as they pleased, and in the centre of them the Royal Marine Band was stationed. When Lord Shaftesbury, the President of the Society, came along the side of the vessel, he was heartily greeted by his young *protégés*. After the indulgence of a luncheon between decks, the boys went through some vocal and athletic exercises, and Mr. Williams, the Secretary, made a short statement, showing the position of the Society, which was followed by an address from Lord Shaftesbury. As an illustration of the noble qualities possessed by some of these poor little fellows, a young lad named Wilcocks was introduced to Lord Shaftesbury as having on the impulse of the moment jumped overboard to save the life of a young messmate who fell into the water. His lordship seemed to be much pleased at having made the acquaintanceship of young Wilcocks, and promised to give him a book or anything else that he liked better. On Lord Shaftesbury leaving, the boys manned the yards and made a capital attempt at good English cheering, and the band struck up the National Anthem.

SCHOLARS' PRIZES FOR 1867.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the schools of the Union, have again decided on giving Prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months and upwards. The following are the conditions for the year ending the 31st of December, 1867 :—

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.

3. Having kept in one situation for twelve months, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the Prize, provided they are in the second place on December 31st, 1867. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. If they have not before received a Money Prize, they will now be entitled to a Prize of Seven Shillings and Sixpence, as well as a Card, provided the Committee of the school recommending them will pay Two Shillings and Sixpence of this sum.

5. Those who have received a Money Prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a Prize Card, and a Book in value not exceeding Two Shillings and Sixpence.

6. They must have been regular in attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to female domestic servants.

7. Shoe-blacks, Occasional Labourers, Scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, or earning more than Ten Shillings per week, will not be eligible for the Prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and school authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1867.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from the application, if the application papers be not fully and accurately filled up, duly signed, and returned to the office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 16th, 1868.

The Prizes may be given in Books, Clothes, or otherwise, as the Committee of the school may determine; but if given in money, it should be placed to the child's account in a Savings' Bank, with a view to induce provident habits.

JOSEPH G. GENT, Secretary.

The Poet's Corner.

THE SOUL-AUCTION.

WHO bids for the little children,
  Body, and soul, and brain?
Who bids for the little children,
  Young, and without a stain?
"Will no one bid," said England,
  "For their souls so new and white,
And fit for all good or evil,
  The World on their page may write?"

"We bid," said PEST and FAMINE,
"We bid for life and limb;
Fever, and pain, and squalor,
Their bright young eyes shall dim;
When the children grow too many
We'll nurse them as our own,
And hide them in secret places,
Where none may hear their moan."

"I bid," said BEGGARY, howling,
"I bid for them, one and all!
I'll teach them a thousand lessons—
To lie, to sulk, and to crawl!"

"And I'll bid higher and higher,"
Said CRIME, with wolfish grin;
"For I love to lead the children
Through the flowery paths of Sin.
They shall swarm in the streets to pilfer,
They shall plague the broad highway,
Till they grow too old for pity,
And ripe for the law to slay.

"Prison, and hulk, and gallows
Are many in the land;
'Twere folly not to use them,
So proudly as they stand.
Give *me* the little children,
I'll take them as they're born,
And feed their evil passions
With misery and scorn."

"Oh, shame!" said TRUE RELIGION,
"That ever this should be!
I'll take the little children—
I'll take them all to me;
I'll raise them up with kindness,
From the mire in which they've trod,
I'll teach them words of blessing,
I'll lead them up to God—

To God, their loving Father,
To Christ, his only Son,
To God, the Holy Spirit,
The Blessed Three in One.
Thus ever looking upward,
They'll tread the narrow way,
Which leads from sin and darkness,
To Everlasting Day."

J. DE FRAINE.

The Teachers' Column.

SPEAKING TO SCHOLARS IN THE STREETS.

I REMEMBER (says a writer in the *Sunday School Teacher's Magazine*) running home to my mother when I was a very little girl, and telling her that I met my Sunday School teacher in the street, and that she stopped and spoke to me and kissed me. How happy that little attention made me is still fresh in my mind.

And I suppose all children are alike in this respect; they love to be noticed by older people, especially by their teachers. We know not how much good a pleasant word or a loving smile may do for the affectionate child—how much they may aid the teacher in bringing these lambs into the fold.

Teachers who never speak to the children out of the class should try this new method! Never be too busy talking with older friends to give a pleasant smile to pupils passing by. Let them know, by word and action, that you at least consider them of some consequence. Said a little boy to me, "I don't believe my teacher cares anything about me. She just comes into the class and asks the questions in the book, and that is all. She never talks *good* to me. She never speaks to me any other time. I don't think she likes to keep Sunday School much."

Little Charley came running to his teacher one day, and leaning upon her lap, looked earnestly and lovingly into her face. He said, "Miss S——, you love me, don't you?" "Yes," she replied, "I love you dearly; but why do you think so? I never told you I loved you." "No, but I knew you did 'cause you always speak to me when you see me, and you look at me and smile. Everybody don't do so. I knew you loved me, and I love you too." As she hugged the little fellow to her heart and kissed his sweet, confiding face, she thought, "If a word or a smile can have such an influence, how must I watch my speech, my actions, my very looks."

When the Good Shepherd was on earth, his every look, word, and gesture were so loving and winning, that they were a "Come unto me," and so the lambs gathered around him. Now that he walks no longer among us, shall not the under-shepherds strive to imitate his spirit and mien, as they watch over the lambs of the flock?

INDIVIDUALIZING.

WE are too apt to limit our teaching to speaking to our class in a *mass*. But what is needed is for every member to feel that our lesson is for *him alone*—that our eye is upon him, and thus that he is as *personally* addressed as if there were no other person in the class.

So should it be with prayer for our class. We lose much of sympathy with each member, and much of real power with God, when we only pray for our class in gross, and not for each member by NAME. As each individual has spiritual wants diverse from the other members of the class, it is obvious that each case requires a distinct treatment, and thus specific prayer for each one is suggested. For it is direct prayer that ever brings a direct answer.

This was beautifully shadowed forth by the breast-plate of the Hebrew high priest. The name common to every tribe ("Israel") was not engraven thereon, but each of the twelve tribes had its special stone, with its own name graven upon it; so that the name of each tribe was, so to speak, separately ushered into the presence of Jehovah. Let us act in the same way, teach and pray individually, and we need not fear failure as Ragged School teachers.

A case in confirmation of this principle may be related. There was some

time since a female Bible class which consisted of 37 members. Of these, within the space of three years, no less than 22 became communicants in various churches, some of whom are now efficient teachers in Ragged Schools.

When the teacher was asked the cause of this unusual success, he ascribed it to three causes:—

First. He spoke to each member of the Bible class *privately* in rotation, when the united teaching was over.

Second. He wrote to two members every week, after private speaking, giving such spiritual advice as he thought needful. He requested a reply; nor did he ask in vain, for to 102 letters which he wrote in one year he received no less than 89 answers.

Third. After thus privately speaking and writing, he prayed for each member of the class *by name.*

Reader, try the experiment, nor doubt that, as a fruit of thus individualizing—by private speaking and by private prayer—souls will be won to Jesus.

The Children's Gallery.

"RIGHT FROM HEAVEN."

In a miserable cottage at the bottom of a hill, two children were hovering over a smouldering fire. A tempest raged without—a fearful tempest, against which man and beast were alike powerless. A poor old miser, much poorer than these shivering children, though he had heaps of money at home, drew his ragged cloak about him as he crouched down at the threshold of the miserable door. He dared not enter for fear they would ask pay for shelter, and he could not move for the storm.

"I am hungry, Nettie."

"So am I; I have hunted for a potato-paring, but I can't find any."

"What an awful storm!"

"Yes, the old tree has blown down. I guess God took care that it didn't fall on the house. See, it would certainly have killed us."

"If he could do that could he not send us some bread?"

"I guess so; let's pray—'Our Father;' and when we come to that part where we say, "give us this day our daily bread," let us stop till we get some bread."

So they began, and the miser, crouching and shivering, listened. And when they paused, expecting in their childish faith to see some miraculous manifestation, a humane feeling stole into his heart. He had bought a loaf at the village, thinking it would last him a great many days; but the silence of the two children spoke louder to him than the voice of many waters. He opened the door softly, threw in the loaf, and listened to the wild, eager cry of delight that came from the half-famished little ones.

"It dropped right from heaven, didn't it?" questioned the younger one.

"Yes; I mean to love God for giving us bread because we asked him."

"We'll ask him every day, won't we? Why I never thought God was so good, did you?"

"Yes, I always thought so, but I never quite knew it before."

"Let's ask him to give father work to do all the time, and we need never be hungry again. He'll do it, I'm sure."

The storm passed; the miser went home. A little flower had sprung up in his heart; and it was no longer barren. In a few weeks he died, but not before he had given the cottage, which was his, to the poor man. And the little children ever felt a sweet and solemn emotion, when in their morning prayers they came to these words, "Give us this day our daily bread."

THE SWEEP AND THE DYING LADY.

Lately we have attended some strange tea-meetings. Most of these have been held in Ragged Schools. Among these parties of dustmen and navvies, gipsies and

thieves, have heard the Gospel of the grace of God. Their sparkling eyes and eager look showed how they drank in the water of life; just, indeed, as do so many of their children in Ragged Schools. It is very pleasant to hear these strange-looking men sing the songs of Sion, and to hear them shout "Thank you, sir," always at the close, and sometimes in the very middle of the address. As they have all got good lungs, they make the schoolroom ring again with their hearty shout.

Amongst these strange meetings was one lately held for sweeps and their wives. Two hundred were present; well washed and neat. Five Christian sweeps made speeches, which it would have done you good to have heard. One of them said, "Brother tradesmen, think of our *privileges*." Those on the platform wondered what those privileges could be. Now whatdo you think are the sweeps' "privileges"? His speech will tell you—"We say a word to the servant in the kitchen, and to missus in the drawing-room; and many a tract have I left at the door, saying, Please give this to missus from sweep."

What a result followed, when a tract was left at a fashionable house at the West End with, "Please give this from sweep." When it was handed to the lady of the mansion on a silver salver, she said she would see the sweep and have some fun with him. He came, and told her that he would not work on a Sunday because it was the Lord's day, and seven days afterwards, when that great lady was lying on her death-bed, she sent for the poor sweep to pray with her, and he remained and prayed with her in that grand bedroom until she died.

Do you not think that this great lady will be very glad to see this sweep when they meet in heaven? Oh, yes! and we hope that you will also meet him there.

Correspondence.

JUVENILE VAGRANTS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—In your leader for August, you indicate that by the Industrial Act of 1866, "any child who is sent out to beg, or who is destitute of a home, may be sent to a certified Industrial School." After intimating that the enforcement of this Act is not devolved solely on officials, a fear is expressed that the public, in criminal self-ease, will "decline to put it into execution *personally*." That such fear is not unwarranted I am sorry to admit "'Tis true, and pity 'tis 'tis true." Yet I am glad to find that there are Christian philanthropists who do not thus shirk their duty to children who are "more sinned against than sinning." For example, that tried friend of Ragged Schools, Sir R. W. Carden, has for many years, in spite of the odium sometimes entailed, often captured and brought juvenile mendicants before the magistrates, and thus has not only rescued them from moral ruin,but caused their parents to be punished for their crime. A popular nobleman, the Marquis of Townshend, also in the interests of the children, pursues the same course, and thus *personally* endeavours to nip in the germ that mendicancy which disgraces our streets.

The following recent case deserves attention, as it illustrates the evil of juvenile mendicancy, and the course which ought to be adopted by every philanthropist to check it. Thus:—"Robert Thomson was charged before Mr. Tyrwhitt with causing and procuring Joseph Thomson, his son, aged seven, to beg, and the boy was also charged with begging. The Marquis

Townshend said he was in St. James's Street, and saw the elder prisoner go up to a carriage and importune a gentleman, and the younger prisoner received something from the gentleman. About eight weeks ago he had brought the elder prisoner to that court for begging, and he had known him to have been in the practice of taking his son about with him for some months past for the purpose of begging. The reason for charging the son as well as the father was that, under the Industrial Schools Act, he might be taken away from the man and sent to school.—The elder prisoner said that he was going to Paddington to get some groundsel. He did not stop in front of the carriage till the gentleman called.—Mr. Tyrwhitt said the man was begging with the child, who ought not to be roaming about, and marched out with him for the purpose of begging. The child was, in fact, made the stalking-horse for the man's begging. He should commit the man for three weeks, and the child would be sent to the workhouse, and then to an Industrial School."

I admit that the task of capturing such children and taking them to a police-station is not a very pleasant one, involving as it does a struggle with a dirty, ragged child in the public streets, and perhaps hooting by a mob. Yet when we see how desirable it is to rescue these half-starved, weary-looking children from the grasp of parents who train them as mendicants in order that they may live in idleness or vice, I cannot but think that to try and save these poor children is the duty of every Christian. Thereby these poor waifs and strays will be rescued from a life of shame, and it may be of eventual crime—for begging and thieving are more allied than is usually supposed; and in the Industrial School they will be trained to win their bread by honest industry. When, then, we think of the examples set by the gentlemen above named, I cannot but think that it will be an incentive to every friend of the juvenile poor to "go and do likewise."

I am, &c.,

QUARTUS.

THE THREE BARGEMEN'S DAUGHTERS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In the above article in the August number of the RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE I perceive the following passage:—"There are many Industrial Homes, training-ships, and other Institutions, for boys, though by no means so many as are needed; but it is a lamentable fact, that for destitute girls there are few such asylums available," &c.

Allow me to recommend for cases similar to those named an excellent Institution for destitute girls, the Friendless Home, 11, Powis Place, Great Ormond Street. Mrs. Stephens, the excellent and most experienced Matron, has devoted twenty years of her life to the work, and has been instrumental in saving, I believe, many hundreds of poor girls. It is especially suitable for those out of place, from the country, or in any way exposed to temptation. Mrs. Stephens, I am glad to say, has succeeded in finding situations for the deserving, as the Home is intended only as a *temporary* Refuge.

I remain, yours respectfully,

A FRIEND TO THE POOR.

Notices of Meetings.

BROOK STREET.

THE twenty-third annual meeting of this institution was held on the 1st of July. Sir R. W. Carden presided. The report stated that the Refuge provides for thirty-four of the most destitute lads, who are generally orphans; these are supplied with food, clothing, education, and work. No less than 649 have been received into this Refuge since 1848; during the past year forty-nine have been admitted, twenty-eight have obtained situations, eight have been restored to their friends, one dismissed, one gone to sea, seventeen left of their own will, and twenty-three remain. The amount of ordinary work done by the inmates during the year is as follows:—Wool and horse-hair picked 40,221 lbs.; fire-wood chopped, &c., 25,112 bundles. At the Day School the average attendance has been 118, and in the summer eighty. Six of the former scholars have obtained the annual prize of the Ragged School Union for keeping their situations to the satisfaction of their employers during the year 1866. The Sewing Class on Thursday afternoon, from two to four o'clock, for girls in connection with the Day School, forms an interesting addition, as the work taught is thoroughly useful. The Sunday School maintains its position as an invaluable auxiliary for imparting religious instruction individually and collectively. The average attendance has been as follows:—In the morning 60, in the afternoon 96, in the evening 182. The highest attendance was 281. The Week Night School, for secular instruction for boys and girls, is held on Friday evenings, and is conducted entirely by voluntary teachers. This school is more particularly for those who are in situations, and cannot attend till their daily toil is done; the average attendance has been thirty. The Sunday Evening Service for the parents and others has had an average attendance of ninety. On the 31st of December a special meeting was held to invoke the Divine blessing on themselves, their country, and the world at large during the New Year; the attendance on this occasion was 150. The Mothers' Class meets every Monday evening from seven to half-past eight, the average attendance being twenty-six. By special contributions the mothers were entertained last summer with a dinner and tea, the intervals being filled up with addresses, lectures on the successful laying of the Atlantic Cable, exhibiting specimens of that and other cables, and on galvanism, with numerous experiments, also part singing. The Penny Bank has enabled many to save up for a time of need, and proved a real friend to upwards of a thousand poor people who are not able to avail themselves of the Post Office Savings Banks, owing principally to the fact of their not being able to save so much as a shilling at a time. The number of deposits made during the year has been 9,488 by 1,112 depositors. The amount deposited has been £388 7s. 7d., of which £222 11s. was paid back during the year, and £112 15s. 6d. at Christmas.

They were thankful to say they were free from debt, but they desired most emphatically to protest against the injustice of a law which enforces the payment of poor-rates on an institution whose sole object is to benefit the lowest class, by prevention and reformation, and to save from destitution and crime those who would probably become a considerable expense to the country.

An opportunity has offered of purchasing the remaining liabilities on the premises, and in future to pay a ground-rent of £8 8s. per annum, instead of their present rent of £70. This opportunity the committee are very anxious to embrace, and have therefore appropriated some of their funds, including a legacy of the late Miss Maria Smith, of Osnaburgh Street, to that purpose; but a further sum of £150 is required to comple'e the

purchase. This amount they earnestly solicited, and trusted the appeal would not be urged in vain.

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. J. R. Ross, H. Simon, Mr. E. J. Hytche, and Messrs. Howard Williams, H. Vincent, and Engall.

PERKINS' RENTS.

The tenth anniversary meeting of this school was recently held. The Earl of Shaftesbury, who was to have taken the chair, was unavoidably absent, and Joseph Payne, Esq., took the chair.

The report said that the institution comprised Day and Evening Schools, Mothers' Meeting, Band of Hope, Penny Bank, Lending Library, and a Clothing Fund; the Working Men's Club, Old Pye Street, late Duck Lane, with its separate efforts of Penny Bank, Labour Loan, Barrow Club, Temperance and Sick Societies, Co-operative Store, Bible and Educational Societies, &c. There are in attendance at the schools, 155 girls, 106 boys, and fifty infants from three years of age up to eighteen, who are taught a little useful secular knowledge, and those words the entrance of which gives wisdom to the simple, for it is to the rising generation that we must look for England's hope. Every year from ten to twelve boys and girls have come forward to receive the school prizes for good conduct, and on this occasion we have had the pleasure of presenting to one youth a prize, who has remained eight years and six months in the situation in which he was first placed. There are now four boys in the shoeblack society (red), one having been promoted to be inspector; forty are in service and various employments, five are at sea, and one is in the Boys' Home at Whitechapel; twenty-nine girls are in service and various employments, and two boys and one girl are gone to endowed schools. We regret to say that we are still in want of some voluntary help both in the Day and Sunday Schools, but especially the latter; at present they can be open only in the afternoon from half-past two to four o'clock. The average attendance is about seventy-four children, which number might easily be doubled could a sufficient staff of voluntary teachers be obtained. Some three or four earnest workers unite with their excellent superintendent in seeking to bring the children to the Saviour, the Ark of Shelter. A Teachers' Monthly Prayer Meeting is held, at which some of the elder children remain, and the earnest prayer is offered up that the Lord would be pleased to send "labourers into his harvest." The Sunday Evening Service, formerly held in Perkins' Rents, has been transferred to the club-room in Old Pye Street.

That the people generally are eager to receive the pure Gospel of Christ has lately been very satisfactorily proved. A blind member of the club, but the eyes of whose understanding the Lord has opened, has devoted himself for the past few weeks to the reading of the New Testament, in the poorer districts of Westminster, &c.; crowds have gathered round to listen, and he has disposed of over 250 portions of Scripture—and no annoyance has on any occasion (*but one*) been offered him. The Mothers' Meeting numbers about eighty women, the mothers of the children attending the school. During the year 2,311 yards of calico, 155 of holland, 411 of flannel, 406 of print, 184 of linsey, 16 pairs of sheets, 2 counterpanes, and a pair of blankets, have been supplied to them—fourpence in the shilling being allowed, and the needles, cotton, tape, &c., are given gratuitously. The Band of Hope continues to assemble every Wednesday evening, from seven to nine o'clock. There is also a Penny Bank, in which there were 169 depositors — amount paid in during the year £55 2s. 10d.

Notwithstanding the past year of unusual disaster and depression, which has deprived us of several valued subscribers, still the Lord has helped us; but we are at the present time a small amount in debt, and we rest on his gracious promise—"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. J. Wright, Messrs. Gent, Blaby, Campbell, and Howlett, and two working men.

Papers, Original and Selected.

PREMATURE JUVENILE LABOUR—ITS PHYSICAL AND MORAL EVILS.

THE early age at which the children of the poor enter the labour-market in London and other great cities is a terrible, as it is a growing, evil. Not one of the least of these evils is that children leave our Ragged Schools at an age when they are fitter for the playground than for the workshop; and they are expected to do the work of a man when their physical strength is little above that of an infant. Thus, for example, in the tanneries and rope-grounds of Bermondsey, children are found at work at eight years of age; and there are few boys who have attained ten years who are not engaged in some handicraft. And this is but a sample of what may be observed in every part of London where factories are planted.

Need we say that the physical evils which are involved in this *forcing* system can only be equalled by the moral ones? Such children are not only stunted in growth, but they too often bear the impress of age in extreme youth. Meet them when and where you may, they look fagged and spiritless. Still boys, they know not what boy-life is. Hence it is a rare thing for them to exhibit that vivacity and buoyancy which makes mere animal life a constant source of pleasure to the healthy child. If they come into our Night Schools, what a contrast they present to those street-boys whose high spirits lead them into all kinds of mischief! Cleaner they may be, and more docile; but then they are too weary to learn much; and they often nod or drop asleep over their lessons. Yet who could possibly chide them for such inattention, when probably they have worked hard in an over-heated, if not poisonous atmosphere, from five in the morning until seven in the evening?

But such physical evils are not limited to the early age at which poor children are employed; for the number of hours they are so occupied, and that continuously, cannot be omitted in this inquiry. Thus we have often heard, whilst visiting Ragged Schools, of children under ten years of age who laboured for fourteen consecutive hours. No rest had they from morn until eve; for they worked even during their meal-times. Discreditable as this was to

employers, it was not less disgraceful to their parents; for in the bulk of cases it was not poverty, but either cupidity or love of drink, which caused them to send their offspring into the factory, not merely to labour, but to be *slowly murdered.* We feel doubtful whether such wicked parents ought not to be punished by the law for their unnatural conduct; but they do not escape the penalty due to their crime, either in the shape of the precocious vices or by the premature death, of these victims of parental neglect.

But, as if these physical evils were not black enough, the character of too many workshops intensifies these evils. Not a few, from the structure of the buildings, or the materials used in manufacture, may be regarded as laboratories of poison. When not ill-ventilated, the sun can scarcely transpierce the grimy windows; and thus God's light, which is as essential to health as air, is almost shut out. The odours are often so sickening, as not to need a Dr. Letheby to show that, like the dens of our byways, they tend to breed either typhus or cholera. Nor are such evils restricted to these factories, but they affect the surrounding district. Thus we recently made the following notes, after visiting Ragged Schools. *Lant Street, Borough:* The smell from the adjacent soap and candle works rendered the school unbearable; and the windows were closed to keep out the effluvia. *Princes Street, Lambeth:* There was a sickening smell both inside and outside the Ragged School, which proceeded from the bone-boiler's in the rear. *Horse-ferry Road, Lambeth:* The smell of rotten grains and horse-droppings, mingled with fat and oil from the adjacent brewery, made the school most noxious. *George Street, Lisson Grove:* A sickening smell—a blended odour of the slaughter-house and stale fish—rendered the school most disgusting. If, then, such mal-odours permeated the district *outside*, it does not require inspection of the premises to learn in what a frightful sanitary state the *inside* of such factories must be. Suffice it to say that, thus blood-poisoned, many of our scholars are carried off as by the black plague; or, if not, and they attain manhood, they are too weak to do a fair day's work. It is this, indeed, which adds so many young or middle-aged men to the pauper-roll; for, even when willing, they are too prematurely exhausted to win "their bread by the sweat of their face." Thus does the avenging Nemesis track the pathway of those who infringe God's physical laws, just as any violation of his moral laws is followed by its own special penalty.

These and similar facts, at which our space forbids us to glance,

led the Crown some time since to appoint a commission of inquiry into juvenile labour in London and other great cities. Prior to these inquiries, information was requested by the Commissioners from the office of the Ragged School Union, and many facts were supplied by the School Agents which materially aided the investigations of the London Factories. We knew something of the terrible evils incident to juvenile labour; but we were not prepared to find that so many children under eight years were employed, as irrefragable facts proved to be the case. These facts, when communicated to the Commissioners, gave a *key* to the inquiry, which has terminated in a valuable report, and an equally valuable Act.

Too many commissions end simply in supplying another volume to the unread heap of blue-books. Necessarily "sensational" as respects facts, they usually end merely in furnishing our newspapers with matter for stirring leaders: and then, like any other nine days' wonder, they are forgotten. So that the promoters of the inquiry have only the consolation of knowing that their fears were not imaginary, but that the striking facts collected more than confirmed every supposition.

Happily, in this case, the report of the Commissioners, based as it was on personal visitation of factories and workshops in all parts of the kingdom, alarmed the public, who had hitherto only treated with indifference the remonstrances of Christian philanthropy. The gross ignorance displayed by some of the provincial juveniles was positively frightful. Thus some children did not know whether King George IV. was alive or dead, or if Queen Victoria was a man or a woman. Others could not tell the name of their country; whilst some thought that England was a part of London. Not a few had never heard the name of Jesus; and their whole theology was summed up in this, "When we die we *goes* to a good place or a bad place." More shocking still, some did not know whether there was a God or not; or if there was, they doubted whether he was a good or a bad being, evidently confounding him with the devil. We need not, then, be surprised to find that prayer was to them unknown; and that some, indeed, could not tell the meaning of the word. The bulk could neither write nor read; for if they had ever attended a school, they had left it so early for work that they had forgotten the little they had learnt.

From the facts collected by the Commissioners, it appeared that the ignorance of these juvenile workers was only matched by their immorality. Thus it was considered a mark of manhood to swear,

and curse, and lie. Disobedience to parents was a matter of course; for how could they be expected to feel any respect for those who caused them to labour beyond their strength in order that they might spend their nights in the pothouse? Fights were got up week by week, and night after night, to glut the brutal tastes of men old enough to be their grandfathers. To secrete the working implements, and thus to cause the dismissal of well-conducted youths, was regarded as a capital joke. Thus early initiated into the practice, ought we to wonder that they become such proficients in the art of "Rattening" when they arrive at manhood? Obscene expressions and actions were common to mere children, making too many workshops to reek like a very Sodom. Girls, alas! were soon contaminated; nor can this excite any surprise; for how could virtue possibly live in an atmosphere like this? Mere children were not rarely carried home drunk, being drawn into this excess by greybeards who gloried in initiating them thus early into this British vice. Those, indeed, who could scarce reach the counter, were often in Manchester found standing on tiptoe asking for a "pennyworth of gin," or, more properly speaking, drugged vitriol. All these terrible evils were shown by the Commissioners to culminate in boys and girls, who were too poor to furnish their bedroom, living together as man and wife without the marriage rite.

These facts not only shocked the public, but, we are glad to say, not a few large employers of juvenile labour, who had fostered these evils solely from want of thought. As a result of this inquiry, an Act has just passed which most properly forbids the hire of children under eight years of age, and regulates the hours of labour of all under thirteen. This Act will come into operation next January. By the synopsis of the Act for regulating juvenile labour (see *post*, p. 233), it will be seen that provision is made for the education of all children under thirteen who are employed in workshops. Whatever doubt there may be respecting the compulsory educational clauses, there can be none as to the sections which place all workshops employing juvenile labour under the provisions of the Sanitary Act of 1866. This will have a reflex influence on adults, for, wherever children are employed in large numbers, the overseers must be men or women of ripe years; and thus both adults and children will be saved from breathing that impure air which is but a synonym for poison.

It will be well for all who are interested in the moral and religious training of the young—and who is not?—to narrowly watch

the execution of this Act. Cupidity has too much at stake to care for any law; and thus if there is any flaw in the clauses of the Act, legal acumen will soon discover it. The promoters of Ragged Schools are especially interested in the successful working of this new Act. For as trustees of the juvenile poor, which is their high vocation, they will find in the new statute for regulating juvenile labour an important aid in their work, the value of which cannot be over-estimated. For when it comes into operation, it will prevent children leaving the Ragged School at too early an age; and we shall no longer be pained to read in the school register this remark attached to children aged seven, "Gone to work." It will, too, prevent our scholars under thirteen from attending Night Schools so worn out by overwork as to leave their faculties so dulled and unimpressible, that we might as well address the stones in the street. Thus will they be fitter to listen to that voice of wisdom, which will no longer "cry aloud in our streets" in vain. And whether we are right or wrong in our sanguine impression that this Act will subserve the interests of true religion, we know, at least, that we shall thereby "gather out the stones" which now impede the march to the city of God.

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

BY D. L. MOODY, OF CHICAGO.

I CANNOT help thinking that, if teachers were earnest and zealous, and often in their closets, they might, at least, each bring one soul to Jesus every year. Now, I believe there is a great deal of infidelity in the Sabbath School, as well as in our churches, on this point, and that even many parents think their children cannot come to Jesus early in life. I fear many teachers go to the Sunday School, and never think of urging upon their dear scholars the importance of immediately surrendering their hearts to Christ. I believe myself that, if children are old enough to come to the Sabbath School, they are old enough to come to Calvary. I have been urging this for many years upon the teachers of America, and God has blessed the effort put forth. In a great many places in America there are in our churches 25, 50, and in some churches 75 and 100, little children gathered in as members, and, I believe, in heart connected with God.

A little girl came, some time ago, before the elders of one of the churches to be examined. After talking with her, they came to the conclusion that, though she might be a Christian, she was too young, being only seven years old, to join the Church, and that she had better wait. The little child, as she turned to go away, said, while the tears fell fast from her eyes, "Please tell me how old I must be before I love Jesus?" That is the question for us to

settle, friends. I believe if the Sunday School teachers of England were only to be faithful in urging upon the children the duty of immediate consecration to Christ, the Sunday School Union would have a different report next year; and, instead of having to tell of 7,000 added to the Church, you would be able to rejoice over 100,000 gathered in.

I was urging this, a little while ago, at Michigan, when an old missionary, who was present, endorsed all that I said. His locks were grey, his pilgrimage was nearly ended. "Sixteen years ago," he said, "my wife died in this county, and I was left with several motherless children. The next Sunday my little girl, seven years old, came to me, and said, 'Shall I not take the children into the bedroom, as mother used to do?' I let her go, and she took her little brother and her sister, three years and a half old, by the hand, and retired to the chamber to pray beside the bed, where they had been accustomed to kneel. When she came back I noticed that she had been weeping, and I said, 'Nellie, what are you weeping about? What is the matter?' 'O father,' she said, 'I could not help weeping. After I had prayed, just as mother taught us to do, little Susan got up to pray.' 'Well,' I said, 'what did she say?' 'She closed her eyes, and lifted up her face to heaven, and said, O God, how could you take my dear mother, and leave me no mother to pray for me? I want you to make me good, for Jesus Christ's sake.'" Said the old missionary, "God heard that prayer, and that little child gave evidence of a change of heart before she was four years old." Do you believe that children can come thus early to Christ? If you do, take them in your arms, and carry them to him; and if you have not believed it hitherto, let me urge you, as a friend and a brother, to go to your class next Sabbath, with your heart burdened with the care of their immediate salvation.

Said a dying boy to his father, "Father, shall I die soon?" "Ah, my child," said the father, "you will not live till night." He smiled, and said, "Then I shall be with Jesus to-night." The father began to weep. Said the boy, "Don't weep, father; don't mourn because I am going. When I get to heaven I will tell Jesus that ever since I remember, you have tried to lead me to him." That is the testimony we want our children to give respecting us after we have gone down to our graves. There is a father, on the banks of the Mississippi river, who would give all the wealth he possesses if he could call up his son from his last resting-place, and make one prayer for him. Some time ago the boy lay dying. "Father," he said, "I wish you would pray for me. You have never prayed for me." The father cried, and said he could not pray. For seventeen years that son had been given to him, and yet he had never breathed his name in prayer. O, prayerless fathers and mothers!—you who never pray with and for your children,—do not suppose that is the way the world is going to be converted. And, O teachers! do not be satisfied with talking in a general way to your scholars, but take them by the hand, and lead them to the Saviour. A friend of mine was urging this, some time ago, upon a mixed audience of teachers, parents, and children; and he pressed upon the two former that they must not be satisfied with just telling the children about the Saviour, but must take them by the hand, and lead them up to him. As he spoke, a little girl got down from her seat in the centre aisle, and, stepping up to the speaker, the

tears streaming down her cheeks, said, "Please, sir, will you lead me to Jesus?"

How many children, in the dark lanes and alleys of this great city, are now reaching out their hands to you, Christian people, Ragged School teachers, and crying, "Lead us to Jesus!" And yet how many Christian people spend the Sabbath without teaching in a class in the Sunday School, or doing anything else for Christ! O! let me urge upon any present who have not got a class to go out next Sunday and gather up one from the streets. They are God's children. You may say they are drunkards' children, that they are dirty, unclothed, barefooted, and not likely to repay your trouble to try and save them; but I tell you they are God's children; and Christ has said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Let me relate one little incident which occurred in the western part of America, in the State of Illinois, some twenty years ago. A poor woman had a class of seven or eight little girls. She was anxious that they should all become Christians, and that, after they were converted, they should go to work for the Saviour. Amongst the children in her class was one little girl, seven years of age, the daughter of a very ungodly man. The father was a young man; but he was one of the worst in the country, a Sabbath-breaker, a drunkard, a blasphemer. The little girl was converted, and on the next Sabbath she urged her father to go with her to the class. He went with her to the door, but he would not go in. He had never been in a place of worship or a school in his life. However, to make a long story short, the superintendent came out, and at length persuaded him to attend the class. This resulted in his conversion; and since then he has established 1,180 Sabbath Schools, and has gathered over 100,000 children into these schools. All this is the fruit of that teacher's leading the drunkard's little daughter to the Saviour, and then urging her to do something for Christ.

You do not know but that there may be a Whitefield, a Wesley, a John Knox, in some of the dark lanes and alleys of London; and if you should be the means of leading them to the Saviour, each, in his turn, may be the instrument of the conversion of thousands. O! remember time is short, and what we do for Christ we ought to do quickly. I heard at the Bible Society meeting of an expression made use of by the devoted Martyn when in this country. "I am willing," he said, "to be torn limb from limb if I could only hear one Hindoo inquiring for Jesus." O that we all had that passion for souls which Henry Martyn had, and that we all had our hearts burdened for their salvation!

Among the most faithful teachers I ever met with was one who did not wake up to a sense of his responsibility till he expected to die. He was a teacher in my school, and one morning, as he came into my store, I noticed that he was very pale. "Ah," he said, "the doctors have given me up to-day. I have had bleeding of the lungs, and I am now going to settle up my business, and go back to die in New York State. I feel that all is right except one thing." "What is that?" I inquired. "It is my Sunday School Class," he said; "if they were all converted, and I thought I should meet them with joy at the judgment-day, what would I not give!" "Let us go and see them," I said. "I have lost so much blood," he replied,

"that I can hardly walk." "I will take you in a carriage," I said. We went together from house to house; for he was a faithful teacher, and knew where all his scholars lived. He was so weak, that when he left the carriage he could hardly cross the side walk. He spoke to all the children, and pleaded with them to give themselves to the Saviour. After thus urging them affectionately, he got down upon his knees, and asked Christ to change their hearts. For ten days he so laboured, and at the end of that time every one of his scholars had been brought to the Saviour. "My work," said he, "is now done, and I shall go home to die." We all met him on the last night he remained in the city; it was a very sad and yet a very joyful meeting. We sang hymns together, and then prayed together. The next evening we thought we would go and see him off by train. We met him on the platform just as the sun was sinking into the west; one after another of his class pressed round him, bade him "farewell," and then we joined in singing,—

"Here we meet to part again,
But when we meet on Canaan's shore
There'll be no parting there."

As the car rolled away from the platform he held up his poor, thin hand, and, pointing to heaven, said, "I shall meet you all there." He has gone from us; but his influence in Chicago is felt still, and will last as long as Chicago stands. Some of my best teachers were converted through his last dying efforts. Be ye also faithful, and God will give you souls for your hire. It was said of Harland Page, that his constant prayer was, "O God, give me souls for my hire That should be the prayer of every Ragged School teacher.

PARIS RAG-PICKERS' SCHOOL.

A FRENCH house in Paris, in which every floor is inhabited by a different family, contains none of the conveniences of an English home. As no dust-holes are to be found, the ashes, the refuse of the kitchen and the sweepings of the work-room, are all carried down from each story every night and morning, and thrown in a heap before the door. These heaps of rubbish the *chiffonniers* look over before the municipal cart clears the streets, and they get a living by taking away everything that can be sold for a few pence. Even in London we sometimes see eccentric, half-mad men and women raking the gutters for pieces of old iron, rags, &c. But here the occupation is so exceptional that it excites wonder, while in Paris it is a recognised calling.

"An Englishwoman in Paris," writing to the *English Independent*, thus speaks of the men and women engaged in this occupation, and of an interesting effort which is being made for their spiritual benefit:—

Many do not gain on an average more than ten sous a-day; and those who make the most—that is, a family where the father and mother, with one or two children, have each their particular street—seldom earn more than twenty francs a week between them. It is a hard life, too; for so poor a class naturally live far away from the rich streets in which they pick up from the heaps.

Many come from outside the walls of Paris, and it is midnight before they reach their homes with their load. Then the basket must be emptied, and the things sorted, and very early in the morning they must be on their rounds again. In the daytime they take some hours' sleep.

The ignorance and poverty of these poor *chiffonniers* drew Mr. Ratcliff's attention when he was in Paris some four years ago; and at one of the reunions at which he spoke he suggested that something might be done to raise their condition. He left Paris the following week; but his appeal had made a deep impression on one of his French hearers. "I felt," she said, when speaking to me of this afterwards, "that his words were addressed to me. I could not get rid of them; nor could I rest till I had made some effort on behalf of this miserable class." She had some difficulty in making a beginning, not knowing where to find their houses. But on going one day to an alley outside the fortifications, in which she was told a great number lived, she found herself in the very midst of them. The alley contained one large house facing the street, which was let out in single rooms, and behind this two rows of most wretched hovels, with little or no furniture except an apology for a bed in one corner. It was in this *cité des chiffonniers*, as it is called, that Madame P. and her husband commenced their labours. The children, as might have been expected, had never been to school; and on being asked if they would like to learn to read, they replied by a French shrug of the shoulders, which implied that to them it was a matter of perfect indifference. But one bright-eyed little Jewish boy thought he should rather like it, and the lesson was begun then and there. Example is powerful with children, and one by one the others joined him. For several Sundays the school was carried on in the open air in the alley; but as the prayer at the close provoked a laugh from the men and women around, Monsieur P. himself hired one of the hovels which was to let at thirty sous a-week, and they continued to meet in it, often crowding forty together, till they were able to get a room in the large house at the entrance of the alley. Here a Day School was opened, and regular Sunday services were established. As the numbers increased, two and then three rooms were thrown into one; and they have now a tolerably large meeting-place. Not long since I saw as many as ninety women and girls assembled in this room, making and mending their clothes under the superintendence of Madame P.

It was an interesting sight. They were poor, many of them very poor indeed; but poverty in France is never of that harrowing description of which London presents so many instances. Their garments were old and patched, but they were put on with care, so as to show to the best advantage; and the taste which every French woman, from the highest to the lowest, possesses, was displayed in the graceful arrangement of the once bright-coloured handkerchiefs which were bound round their heads—the invariable head-dress of these women. They were singing as they worked, and appeared remarkably cheerful.

I have heard of many instances of a change of life which has come into the households of some of these poor people since the establishment of the mission in the alley. Drunkards have been reclaimed, many couples have been induced to marry, the wives have not only learned to do needlework, but to read, too, while the greater part of the children can now both read and

write. The *chiffonniers* are a very roving set, though they generally congregate together, and the population of the *cité* was at first continually changing; but many have since become so much attached to the place, on account of the good things they have learned there, that they could not be induced to change their hovel for a better room in another part of Paris.

If any of our readers who visit Paris wish to see another phase of French life than that which the Boulevards and Champs Elysées present, we would ask them to pay a visit some Wednesday afternoon to the *Salle Evangélique* in this *cité des chiffonniers*, 77, Boule de la Récolle, feeling sure that they will be amply rewarded for their trouble.

FACTS AND FIGURES OF REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

THE tenth report of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools has just been issued.

From this we learn that in England there are 50 Reformatories; in Scotland, 14; making a total of 64. Of these there are connected with Roman Catholics, 5 for boys and 3 for girls. The total number of juvenile offenders in these schools on December 31st last was 5,335, showing an increase of 420 above the last report. During the year 938 boys and 269 girls have been discharged; of these 69 emigrated, 155 went to sea, 20 enlisted, 33 were discharged from ill-health, and 96 absconded; 13 only are reported as incorrigible, or as having been reconvicted. With the exception of 34, who have died, all the rest are in various occupations throughout the country, and may be looked upon as saved from a course of vice and infamy. The certified Industrial Schools made some considerable progress both in number and efficiency during the year. The number of children under detention in this useful class of institutions on the 31st of December, 1866, was 2,566, viz., 1,492 in England and 1,074 in Scotland.

The returns furnished by the different schools of the results of their industrial departments show that to use juvenile labour to a profit is a matter dependent as much on the management as on the locality or circumstances of the institution. Of this, Kingswood Reformatory, near Bristol, is a remarkble example. Nothing could be more unfavourable than the situation or the soil of this institution; but, by the energy and skill of the superintendent, a return of about £5 per head on the boys has been realized, chiefly by the manufacture of bricks and tiles. The same diversity is found as to the industrial results of Girls' Reformatories—the Ipswich and Liverpool girls making a profit from laundry work of nearly £6 per head, or above 2s. per week on each inmate.

But let us return to the other side, and see what has been the cost to the country. The Treasury payments have amounted to £67,978 13s. 2d.; contributions from rates, £11,742 16s. 4d.; the balance of the total expenditure of £102,191 15s 4d. being made up of payments from parents, profit on industrial department, and general contributions. The Industrial School returns are necessarily incomplete, but they show that above 4,600 children

are taught, at a cost of about £49,826; while towards the expenses the parents contributed £1,542 9s. 10d.

There are two points to which the attention of those who read this report cannot fail to be drawn. The first is the smallness of the contributions from the parents or guardians, whose conduct has too often been the main cause of their children's delinquency. Out of above £150,000 expended on these schools, less than £4,500 is made up of payments by parents. Nor is this the worst evil, for it is to be feared that idle or wicked parents are too ready to let their children go to an Industrial School, or qualify for a Reformatory, with the distinct object that they themselves may thus be freed from all further cost and trouble, while their children receive a good education and are well cared for at the public expense. This should be opposed as far as practicable, and payment insisted on according to the parents' means. We admit, however, that it is cheaper to the country to pay for prevention—for the starting in life of these children with some prospect of their becoming good and virtuous citizens—than to wantonly suffer them to increase the numbers of a class which undoubtedly is a most costly one to the nation—the confirmed criminal class.

No one can visit the certified Industrial Schools in Middlesex, or the training ship the *Chichester*, without seeing how immeasurable is the distance, mental and moral, between boys brought up in these schools and those dragged up Topsy fashion, in the alleys and dens of the metropolis.

The second point worth notice is that the children trained in Romanist Schools do not turn out so well, but are more frequently reconvicted than those trained under Protestant influence. In the English Protestant Schools 72 per cent. of the boys are reported as doing well, but in the Romish only 55. This fact is confirmed by the reconvictions. These sentences are recorded against 13 per cent. of Protestant boys, and 25 per cent. of Catholics. This result cannot be ascribed to any difference in the class of children entered at the different Reformatories, but doubtless results from the reliance placed on outward restraints by Roman Catholics. Hence, when these powers are withdrawn, and the priest or his deputy is absent, or unable to bring his influence to bear, the youth has not sufficient moral strength left in him to stand firmly alone. So much for treating youth as animals, to be subdued by faith in Priests rather than by developing faith in Christ.

In Memoriam.

REV. JOSEPH BROWN.

After a sleep of nigh two centuries, about fifty years ago the Church awoke to its mission as Christ's light-bearer to a dark world. The first sign of spiritual life was the establishment of those missions to evangelize

both pagans and Jews which now cover the globe. The second sign of spiritual life was the formation of Home Missionary Societies. This was followed about twenty-five years ago by an attempt to reach our juvenile outcasts and destitutes in the shape of Ragged Schools. Year by year the pioneers in this great movement to evangelize the waifs and strays of our great cities are called to their rest. Knowing the faith and zeal of most, we can only pray that their successors in this great home mission may be baptized with the same faith in the gospel of Christ, and have the same persistence in the work, and then we doubt not that the reward of these pioneers will be vouchsafed to their successors.

Amongst the most practical of these pioneers was the Rev. Joseph Brown, of Christ Church, Blackfriars, who died at Richmond on the 13th day of August last. His career was notable for a thorough practice of the true principles of Christianity, especially for his ministration and achievements in this wise among the lowly. Wherever he served he became emphatically pastor of his flock, giving and gaining a sympathy that was power. He was ordained in 1829, and first held a curacy at Sheffield. In 1833 he was presented by the late William Wilberforce to St. Paul's, Mill Hill. Six years afterwards he was made chaplain of the Government Schools at Norwood. A volume of sermons, which he there preached to the young, showed how well able he was to reach the heart of youth. He was transferred by the Bishop of London to the incumbency of St. Matthias, Bethnal Green, in 1844. This was when his most valuable opportunity came. In that district, peopled by the very poor, an arduous work of charity was needed, and in him a worthy champion was found. From this time the distinguishing feature of his later ministrations became more noticeable, and his endeavours to benefit the poor soon obtained recognition. In 1849 the Bishop of Winchester presented him to the rectory of Christ Church, Blackfriars, which he filled till his death.

The parish was peopled not only by a very indigent class, but by a large number of professional thieves and mendicants. And although the Chatham and Dover Railway has pulled down many courts and alleys whose very stones could speak of rapine and bloodshed, yet a large population of waifs and strays still remain to task the energies of any faithful pastor. The character of this flock led Mr. Brown to originate many plans for their temporal welfare. Based as they all were on Bible principles, temporal blessings became the lever to those higher ones which are spiritual. Thus, at the outset of the movement, Mr. Brown gave a warm support to Ragged Schools, and established one in Gravel Lane, in the very heart of the ragged and criminal population. It was always composed of the right class; ragged, shoeless, homeless boys and girls attending in large numbers. The Albert Institution, in Gravel Lane, was established and built by him about eight years ago, and opened by the late Alderman Wire, then Lord Mayor of London, for the education of infant children, and the children of the ragged poor. There is also connected therewith a large dormitory and reading-room, with culinary departments for the accommodation of working-men, for which they are charged 2s. per week, but are often allowed to reside for a time free of charge; also private apartments for married aged couples at a rental of 3s. per week, including the use of gas and the public laundry. The public

laundry is another feature of the institution offering a great advantage to the poor, who are charged 1d. per hour for the use of the tubs, drying, and ironing apparatus. Connected therewith is a public bath for the use of the poor, for which they are charged 2d., hot or cold water, towels, &c.

But that which has specially endeared his name to multitudes was the part he bore in organising "rural parties" of the poorer classes, and excursions of the poor from workhouses, schools, &c., into the country. More than any man he helped to establish this custom. Mr. Brown's party usually exceeded 3,000. The eccentric costume of most, their strange dialect, and their exuberant delight when, headed by their good pastor, they caught their first glimpses of the sea, what pen can adequately describe? Suffice it to say, that in many of the wretched hovels of Blackfriars it was talked of many months before, and was the subject of fireside chat for many months afterwards. All this was made subservient to more direct spiritual work; and there is reason to believe that many once desolate hearts found the peace which is treasured up in Jesus.

Mr. Brown was as remarkable for his simplicity of manner as for his simplicity of purpose. Of a most sympathetic heart, the poorest and the vilest felt that they could tell their troubles, great or small, unto him as to a genuine friend; and many owe more prosperous days to the means he supplied to extricate them from pecuniary difficulties, or to start them in a fair way to help themselves in future life. We do not wonder, then, that the poor flocked in large numbers to his funeral; for in his death they mourned the loss of a true benefactor—one who not only pointed to Christ, but led the way.

EALING REFUGE.

On August 15th, an interesting meeting took place at Ealing House, Ealing, Middlesex, on the occasion of the inauguration of the building as an Industrial School for Homeless and Destitute Girls. The number of inmates exceeds forty. The arrangements, which have been made under the judicious inspection of Mr. W. Williams, Secretary to the Society, by whom the Home has been established, are most complete. The dormitories are admirably arranged and well ventilated. There is an excellent school-room and a roomy kitchen.

The Earl of Shaftesbury said the institution they had met to inaugurate was one of paramount importance, and he had long been anxious to see greater efforts than had hitherto been made in behalf of poor, destitute, and neglected girls. He could not account for the fact, but certain it was that they had been much overlooked in the general arrangements for the instruction and benefit of the poor. We had no end of Reformatories and institutions for boys, but it was only of late that the public had been brought to recognise the fact that the girls were at least entitled to a share of public consideration. He had just said that this was an institution of paramount importance, because history and daily experience proved that the character of a nation very much depended on the character of its women. Upon their sentiments and conduct, and purity of principle, must rest in a great measure the

morality of the male sex. It was, indeed, an ordinance of Providence that it should be so. The first eight years of the life of every child were passed under maternal care, and it was in the power of the mother to impress on the heart of the child feelings and sentiments that might never be obliterated. This was a matter of great responsibility, and he wished he could also say it was always a matter of duty and affection; but he was afraid that a large proportion of mothers in England did not possess the qualities by which they ought to be distinguished. The inquiries that had been made in the great towns, with a view to legislation for the reduction of the hours of labour, had shown that it was not so much the employers as the parents of children employed in the various trades, who were at the root of the corruption and degradation manifested among a large proportion of the juvenile working population. From the highest class to the lowest every woman had the same power and responsibility with regard to her offspring. Every mother had the same means of impressing the minds of her children, and there was scarcely an instance of a man who had become distinguished for his moral and religious life, or who had taken a prominent part in the service of God, who did not trace the effect that had been produced to the teaching of his mother or of some excellent woman who had acted to him the part of a mother. It would be seen, therefore, how essential it was that attention should be directed to the careful and judicious training of females. Everywhere it would be found that it was woman who constituted the basis of the morality of a nation. In cases such as we read of in Baker's account of his expedition up the White Nile, where both men and women were equally degraded, it seemed as if the people were beyond all possibility of recovery; but in other countries, where the men were to a great extent degraded, if there was any evidence of female character and affection among the women the case was not utterly hopeless. Mungo Park had stated that during his travels through Africa, however degraded he found the men, there was always some remnant of womanly nature among the females, and that in the moments of his greatest danger and suffering he was sure to receive the compassionate assistance of the women. This was a matter in which everybody was interested, from the Queen on her throne down to the humblest tradesman who kept a serving woman. It was a constant matter of complaint among various classes of society that it was very difficult to get a good housemaid, a good cook, or a good laundrymaid. But such an institution as this would always be able to supply good servants. It should not be forgotten that whatever the vigilance of parents, children must necessarily be, to a great extent, under the care of servants, and consequently it became a matter of importance to see that the training of females, who were to fulfil the duties of domestic servants, was not overlooked. The object of those who had established this institution was to do for girls what had already been done for boys. On board the *Chichester* they had provided for the maintenance and training of a number of boys who would ultimately be of great use in the mercantile and Royal marine; and in this institution they were providing for the tuition and training of a number of young girls. If the present effort were as successful as that which had led to the appropriation of the *Chichester*, before very long there would be no end of applications for domestic servants. The promoters and supporters of this institution were endeavouring to supply a great want,

which he did not hesitate to say, without fear of contradiction, would give to England a new generation of wives and mothers.

It appeared from a statement read by Mr. Williams, that in July, 1852, the Committee began their benevolent work for the benefit of destitute or outcast girls. The funds at their disposal were then very small, and consequently only six girls could be admitted into the house at 19, Broad Street, Bloomsbury. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided at the inauguration of that building. Fears were at that time entertained as to whether anything could be made of the poor girls; but all objections to the work soon vanished, for it became apparent that the minds and hearts of these girls were as susceptible to good impressions, and were as capable of yielding to the training and discipline under which they were placed, as the offspring of a higher class. The number of inmates gradually increased until it reached to about forty. Applications of a pressing nature being still made for admission, the Committee were led to extend this branch of their work still further, and consequently they hired a large house at Acton as a branch Home. This house was also inaugurated by Lord Shaftesbury on the 3rd of July, 1860. The inmates here, as in the Broad Street Home, gradually increased until, in June, 1866, the number reached over forty, when possession of the house was given up, as the Committee and the trustees of the property were unable to arrange for converting the stables into a suitable washhouse and laundry. Every effort was made to obtain suitable premises, but without success, and a house was therefore taken temporarily at Kilburn, and the girls were removed there. In March last the present premises were pointed out to the Committee as likely to suit for a Home, and ultimately arrangements were made for purchasing them. The premises are copyhold, but nearly equal to freehold, as the quit rents only amount to a few shillings a year. They were in a dirty and dilapidated condition, and a considerable sum has been expended in repairing and cleansing them. The total cost for the purchase of the property and the repairs and alterations was over £2,600, towards meeting which expenditure and for annual subscriptions for the support of the girls an earnest appeal was now made. There were now forty-four inmates in this house and forty-eight girls in the Home, 19, Broad Street. The Committee intended to increase the number to 50 in each Home, so that they might have 100 girls under their care. The girls in each Home are fed, clothed, lodged, educated, and trained for domestic service. They are taught all kinds of domestic work so as to fit them as far as possible to become useful and honest servants. Since the establishment of the Homes down to the close of last year 710 girls had been admitted, and 586 had been sent to service at home or abroad, or otherwise provided for.

OUR CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY.

Alas for the London child! No wonder his cheek soon pales, or that he passes into an early grave! To him "the breezy call of incense-breathing morn" is unknown. Opening the window in the morning may change the temperature, but it can scarcely purify the air in his room. He is miles away from the green fields; and he is to be pitied rather than blamed if he should

seek recreation in places that frequently impair physical strength. Some are strong and vigorous enough to battle with the odds against them; but the stunted growth and pinched appearance of poor children is a picture that too often meets the eye. And as we pass through the crowded streets of a metropolis covering one of the healthiest sites in England, we cannot but lament that the largest city in the world should have had its houses huddled together regardless of sanitary principles, and that that which foresight and skill might have made healthy has been deformed into dens of disease, where men's lives are sadly shortened. The open spaces in and around London relieve the darkness of the picture. They are its salt and its preservatives from forms of disease at once mysterious and terrible.

Influenced by reflections like these most London Ragged Schools arrange for country excursions during the summer. But at the close of the excursion season it was always found that some Ragged Schools were too poor to pay the expenses of this treat. The Ragged School Union has, therefore, for many years organised a united excursion for these poor children, at a cost of about 1s. 3d. per head. This expense has been supplied by means of a kind letter of Lord Shaftesbury to those who, knowing the value of country air themselves, enjoy it all the more because they, unlike Dives, give Lazarus an opportunity of participating in the blessings so freely vouchsafed by our common Father.

This united excursion came off on the 16th of August last at Petersham Park. The children of 18 Ragged Day Schools were present; and the party included about 1,700 scholars and teachers. In addition, about 120 mothers from St. Giles's—not counting babies, of which there were a fair share—were feasted at the expense of a member of the Parent Committee.

Great interest was shown in the proceedings both in London and at Richmond. One poor woman, indeed, gave the official who conducted the party from the Waterloo Station one shilling to treat the children with fruit. But the day's proceedings are so well narrated in the "Richmond Notes" by a long-tried friend and teacher of Ragged Schools, that we think any further remarks on our part to be needless.

"Sir,—Time passes so rapidly that I can hardly realise the fact that another year has gone since I last asked you to chronicle in the 'Richmond Notes' 'a day in the Park with the Ragged School children of London.' This year has been a very unfavourable one for out-door amusements, and it has been with much regret that one has seen so many schools pass through the town in most unpropitious weather, destroying in a great degree the pleasure of the poor children and the teachers who have accompanied them.

The day fixed on for the annual gathering from the Ragged Schools was the 16th of August. The 15th was a thoroughly wet one, and many were the anticipations of a similar result on the 16th; but the morning broke auspiciously, and by eleven o'clock, when about 1,700 children had assembled on the Green, the sun shone forth, and a fine day was by universal consent deemed certain. It was all that could be desired; the fine air freshened the atmosphere, and made the beautiful park at Petersham thoroughly enjoyable. The children came from all parts of London, and were accompanied by about 100 teachers. Having formed on the Green, headed by the band of

the Richmond British Schools, kindly lent for the occasion, and followed by one from Ferdinand Place Ragged School, both of which performed a variety of lively tunes most creditably, all proceeded through the town. Many kind expressions were uttered by lookers-on, and pleasure expressed that so many of the poorest children in London should have a trip into the country. Arrived at the park, who can describe their delight? To numbers this is the only day in the year that they ever see a tree or a green field. With what ecstasy they rolled on the grass, and joined in all kinds of games, can only be imagined by those who witnessed the happy scene! That excellent nobleman, Lord Shaftesbury, to whom the Ragged Schools of London owe so deep a debt of gratitude, had promised to attend if possible, but was prevented by pressing engagements. It would have indeed rejoiced him to have witnessed the glorious scene, and a right hearty welcome would he have experienced from 'his children' had he been present. Nothing could exceed the enjoyment of the day. Toys without number were distributed, balloons sent up, to the great delight of the children; all was sunshine, not an event occurred to mar its pleasure. A little before seven the schools were again mustered, and returned through the town. The children were as fresh as when they arrived, and their cheers and songs continued the whole way from the park to the railway, showing how thoroughly they enjoyed their visit to beautiful Richmond. The arrangements of our excellent and indefatigable Secretaries in London, and of Mr. Cooper at the railway station, could not have been better. No accident of any kind occurred, and hundreds of our poor young friends will long remember when they came 'to Richmond to spend a happy day,' which was the burthen of their song.

Permit me to add that the expense of this annual gathering is defrayed by the special subscriptions of kind friends, and is not taken from the general fund of the Ragged School Union.

Yours faithfully,

"W. J. M.

Richmond, August 20th, 1867.

THE NEW ACT ON JUVENILE LABOUR.

THINKING that it will be serviceable to all who are interested in the physical well being of youth, we give the following epitome of the new Act for regulating the labour of juveniles in workshops. With the necessary modifications, it is based on the Factory Act promoted by Lord Shaftesbury above thirty years ago. By the new Act every branch of juvenile labour comes under Government supervision for the first time. We can only hope that the same beneficial results may spring from the new statute as has resulted from the operation of the Factory Act.

(1.) No child under the age of eight years shall be employed in any handicraft. (2.) No child shall be employed on any one day in any handicraft for a period of more than six and a half hours, and such employment shall take place between the hours of six in the morning and eight at night. (3.) No young person shall be employed in any handicraft during any period of

twenty-four hours for more than twelve hours, with intervening periods for taking meals and rest amounting in the whole to not less than one hour and a half, and such employment shall take place only between the hours of five in the morning and nine at night. (4.) No young person shall be employed in any handicraft on Sunday, or after two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, except in cases where not more than five persons are employed in the same establishment, and where such employment consists in making articles to be sold by retail on the premises, or in repairing articles of a like nature to those sold by retail on the premises. (5.) No child under the age of eleven years shall be employed in grindings, in the metal trades, or in fustian-cutting. If any young person is employed in contravention of this Act, the following consequences shall ensue:—First, the occupier of the workshop in which such child is employed shall be liable to a penalty of not more than £3. Second, the parent of or the person deriving any direct benefit from the labour of, having the control over the child, shall be liable to a penalty of not more than 20s., unless it appears that the offence has been committed without the consent of that person. The next clause enacts that the owners of workshops where grinding is carried on shall, where necessary, provide fans for the protection of their *employés;* and in default shall be liable to a penalty of not more than £10 nor less than £3.

Clause 9 provides that if it appears to any justice of the peace that there is reasonable cause for believing that any of the provisions of this Act or of the Sanitary Act, 1866, are contravened in any workshop, it shall be lawful for such justice to empower the complainant to enter into such workshop at any time within forty-eight hours from the date of such order, and to examine such workshop. Any inspector of factories may, when any person is at work at any handicraft, enter any workshop and inspect the condition thereof, and examine, touching any matter within the provisions of this Act, or of the Sanitary Act, 1866, so far as relates to such workshop, the persons therein, provided that he report to one of her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State the fact of such entry, and the condition of the workshop in his next half-yearly report. All penalties under this Act may be recovered summarily, before two or more justices.

The following regulations are made (subject to the provisions hereinafter mentioned) respecting the education of children employed in workshops:—(1.) *Every child employed in a workshop shall attend school for at least ten hours* in every week during the whole of which he is so employed. (2.) In computing for the purpose of this section the time during which a child has attended school, there shall not be included any time during which such child has attended either—(*a*) In excess of three hours at any one time, or in excess of five hours on any one day; or (*b*) On Sundays; or (*c*) Before eight o'clock in the morning, or after six o'clock in the evening; provided that the non-attendance of any child at school shall be excused—(1.) For any time during which he is certified by the principal teacher of the school to have been prevented from attendance by sickness or other unavoidable cause. (2.) For any time during which the school is closed for the customary holidays, or for some other temporary cause. (3.) For any time during which there is no school which the child can attend within one mile from the workshop or residence of such child. The parent of every child employed in a workshop

shall cause that child to attend school in a manner required by this Act. Every parent who wilfully fails to act in conformity with this section shall be liable to a penalty of not more than 20s. for each offence.

The following schedule provides for temporary exceptions alluded to above :—During the first six calendar months next ensuing the day on which this Act is to come into operation, children of not less than eleven years of age may be employed for the same time, and subject to the same conditions, for and subject to which young persons may be employed under this Act. During the first thirty calendar months next ensuing the commencement of this Act, children of not less than twelve years of age may be employed for the same time, and subject to the same conditions, for and subject to which young persons may be employed under this Act. During the first twelve calendar months next ensuing the commencement of this Act, children, young persons, and women may be employed on Saturdays until half-past four o'clock in the afternoon. During the first thirty calendar months next ensuing the commencement of this Act, children may be employed in the manufacture of preserves from fruit in the same manner as they were employed therein before the passing of this Act. During the first thirty calendar months next ensuing the commencement of this Act, male young persons of not less than sixteen years of age may be employed in any workshop where the manufacture of machinery is carried on in the same manner as if they were male persons exceeding the age of eighteen years.

The Poet's Corner.

NOT IN VAIN.

"Your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. xv. 58.

"I HAVE laboured in vain," a teacher said,
And her brow was marked with care—
"I have laboured in vain," and she bowed her head,
And bitter and sad were the tears she shed
In that moment of dark despair.

"I am weary and worn, and my hands are weak,
And my courage is well-nigh gone,
For none give heed to the words I speak,
And in vain for a promise of fruit I seek,
Where the seed of the Word is sown."

And again with a sorrowful heart she wept,
For her spirit with grief was stirred,
Till the night grew dark, and at last she slept,
And a silent calm o'er her spirit crept,
As a whisper of "peace" was heard.

And she thought in her dream that the soul took flight
To a blessed and bright abode—
She saw a throne of such dazzling light,
And harps were ringing, and robes were white—
Made white in a Saviour's blood.

And she saw such a countless throng around,
As she never had seen before—
Their brows with jewels of light were crowned,
And sorrow and sighing no place had found,
For the troubles of time were o'er.

Then a white-robed maiden came forth and said,
"Joy! joy! for thy trials are past!—
I am *one* that thy gentle words have led
In the narrow pathway of life to tread—
I welcome thee home at last!"

And the teacher gazed on the maiden's face—
She had seen that face on earth,
When with anxious heart, in her wonted place,
She had told her charge of a Saviour's grace,
And their need of a second birth.

Then the teacher smiled, and an angel said,
"Go forth to thy work again;
It is not in vain that the seed is shed—
If only *one* soul to the cross is led,
Thy labour is not in vain!"

And at last she woke, and her knees she bent,
In grateful childlike prayer—
And she prayed till an answer of peace was sent,
And Faith and Hope as a rainbow blent
O'er the clouds of her earthly care.

And she rose in joy, and her eye was bright,
Her sorrow and grief had fled—
And her soul was calm, and her heart was light,
For her hands were strong in her Saviour's might,
As forth to her work she sped.

Then rise, fellow-teacher, to labour go!
Wide scatter the precious grain—
Though the fruit may never be seen below,
Be sure that the seed of the Word shall grow:
Toil on, in faith, and thou shalt know,
"Thy labour is not in vain!"

The Teachers' Column.

"DEAD FLIES."

RECENTLY musing over Solomon's words, "Dead flies cause the apothecary's ointment to send forth a stinking savour," a fact which the later page of his history so sadly illustrated, I fell into a reverie. In the midst of this half-waking dream some large "dead flies," the skeletons of which had been noticed in sundry Sunday Ragged Schools, came fully in view. As they shed an unsavoury odour, and spoil the best work wherever they are found, I will give a list of seven of these "dead flies."

1. Teachers entering the school *after* the devotional exercises have commenced.

All eyes—as well teachers as scholars—are directed to the culprit; and so the spirit of prayer flies. How much the spirituality of the school also flees who can tell?

2. Irregular attendance. This "dead fly" may be seen in many Sunday Ragged Schools; in fact, their ugly skeletons may found almost everywhere. Sometimes it is wet—sometimes a cold prevents—sometimes a special service; but more often no cause can be assigned. This "dead fly" has the effect of contaminating the bulk of the scholars; for when irregular scholars have been remonstrated with they have often said, "What is the use of our coming when we are not sure that our teacher will be at school?" Is not this witness true? For though it is a common saying, it is an untrue one, "He does no harm to any one but himself." Yea, if one member suffer, *all* the members must suffer with it.

3. No prior preparation for the class. The teacher turned the Bible over at haphazard in sight of the scholars to find a *subject* for the evening. Now, as it was clear that the teacher came with nothing, the scholars expected nothing, and so they went home not disappointed. But then how listless or vacant they were, and thus the whole evening was spoiled by that "dead fly." Many of these teachers were doubtless really earnest, for had they not trudged miles through rain or snow to meet their class? But the fact that they had not thought beforehand what spiritual food to give to their scholars made other teachers suspect them of want of earnestness in the work, and so this "dead fly" spoiled a pot of ointment which would otherwise have been odorous and refreshing to all.

4. Chatting with the teacher of the next class. This "dead fly," I am glad to say, is rarer than the preceding ones, but its skeleton is occasionally found in Ragged Schools. Where it exists, the scholars of both classes amuse themselves, not by talking aloud, for that would have prevented their teachers chatting, but by slyly pulling each others hair, or making grimaces across the school-room to their favourites.

5. Clock-watching. Gentle reader, have you never scented that mal-odorous fly? One sign is prominent whenever this "dead fly" floats in the ointment-jar—the lesson drags, as if teaching were a very weariness; and instead of the eye being fixed on the class, it wanders to the clock-hands every minute. Need I say that the scholars also become clock-watchers, and so visibly exult when the superintendent's bell closes the dreary lesson?

6. Stiffness to scholars. If some few teachers are so familiar as to lose the dignity proper to their office, others are too *stiff in the cravat*. When a teacher does not shake hands with his scholars, or give them a smile of recognition when he meets them in the street, his class naturally thinks that he does not care for them. Now, Christian sympathy is not only the best, but the only lever for Ragged Schools; and where this is not, however capable a teacher may be in other respects, this "dead fly" effectually spoils the best pot of ointment.

7. Want of faith in the work. Take a teacher who does not *expect* conversions, and we may be sure that he will never hear his scholars say, "Sir, what must I do to be saved?" The teacher may long and even pray for such conversions; but this "dead fly" neutralises all earnestness, and so affects the whole school with its own deadness, that conversion is a rarity in its annals.

In some Ragged Schools, I am glad to say, that not one of these "dead flies" can be traced. But in those Sunday Schools where the skeleton of but one can be seen, I trust that their unsavouriness and hideousness will cause them to be pulled out of the pot of ointment at once. Then will the ointment-jar, purified by this process, smell so sweetly that, like the spikenard with which Mary bathed the feet of Jesus, the school "will be filled with the odour of the ointment."

Q. IN THE CORNER.

The Editor's Note-book.

THE WAY TO FAIL.

"Desponding Christians do not make successful workers or valiant soldiers. 'Feeble hearts,' and 'ready-to-halts,' and 'little faiths,' win no battles, and wear no crowns. They are so occupied with themselves, with their own experiences, their own evidences, their changing moods and feelings, that they have no time for manly, noble service. They are so busy in trying to perform 'acts of faith,' and, having performed them, they are so intent on analysing them, in order to ascertain whether they be all of the exact quality or quantity which will recommend them to God, that they leave no space for 'joy in believing,' and no room for the free, large-hearted labour, which such joy cannot fail to lead to. Tossed up and down on the waves of unbelief, like Paul's ship in Adria, they are in perpetual fear of shipwreck, and have no heart to work. Shutting their eyes against the light, they grope their way uncertainly, and cannot run the race. Afraid to believe, but not afraid to doubt; afraid to trust, but not afraid to distrust; doubting themselves, and making that a reason for doubting God; putting away peace, but giving full scope to gloom; refusing light, but letting darkness reign within them; they are not in a condition to do hard work, nay, to do any work at all.

Strength comes from joy, and of that joy they have none. They refuse both food and medicine, and they become lean and sickly. They are fitter for the hospital than for the battle-field. They seem, too, to get more and more emaciated, though the food provided is abundant. Labouring under what physicians call atrophy, the more they eat the less they seem to be fed."—*Dr. H. Bonar.*

The martyr Latimer said, "When I live in a settled and steadfast assurance about the state of my soul, methinks then I am as bold as a lion; I can laugh at all trouble: no affliction daunts me. But when I am eclipsed in my comforts, I am of so fearful a spirit that I could run into a very mouse-hole."

PATIENCE WITH CHILDREN.

Be patient with the little ones. Let neither their slow understanding nor their occasional pertness offend you, or provoke the sharp reproof. Remember the world is new to them, and they have no slight task to grasp, with their unripened intellects, the mass of facts and truths that crowd upon their attention. You are grown to maturity and strength through years of experience, and it ill becomes you to fret at the little child that fails to keep pace with your thought. Teach him patiently, as God teaches you, "line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little." Cheer him on in this conflict of mind; in after years his ripe, rich thought shall rise up and call you blessed.

Bide patiently the endless questionings of children. Do not roughly crush the springing spirit of free inquiry with an impatient word or frown, nor attempt, on the contrary, a long and instructive reply to every slight and casual question. Seek rather to deepen their curiosity. Convert, if possible, the careless question into a profound and earnest inquiry; and aim rather to direct and aid, than to answer the inquiry. Let your reply send the little questioner forth, not so much proud of what he has learned, as anxious to know more. Happy you, if in giving children the fragment of truth they ask for, you can whet their curiosity with a glimpse of the mountain of truth lying beyond; so wilt thou send forth a philosopher, and not a silly pedant into the world.

Bear patiently the childish humours of those little ones. They are but the untutored pleadings of the young spirit for

care and cultivation. Irritated into strength, and hardened into habits, they will haunt the whole of life like fiends of despair, and make these little ones curse the day they were born. But, corrected kindly and patiently, they become the elements of happiness and usefulness. Passions are but fires that may either scorch us with their uncontrolled fury, or may yield us a genial and needful warmth.

Bless your little ones with a patient care of their childhood, and they will certainly consecrate the glory and grace of their manhood to your service. Sow in their hearts the seeds of a perennial blessedness, and its ripened fruit will afford you a perpetual joy.

WHOSOEVER AND WHATSOEVER.

WHOSOEVER and whatsoever are two precious words often found upon the lips of Christ.

"*Whosoever* will, let him take the water of life freely." "*Whatsoever* ye ask in my name, that will I do."

"*Whosoever*" is on the outside of the gate, and lets in all who choose. "*Whatsoever*" is on the inside, and gives those who enter the free range of all the region and treasury of grace.

"*Whosoever*" makes salvation free; "*whatsoever*" makes it full.

DEPENDENCE ON GOD.

WE are most likely to prosper in our attempts to glorify God and serve our generation when we are convinced by experience that we can do nothing of ourselves. When our whole dependence is placed on him, and our only expectation is from him, we shall then be prepared to mark and to record his works of power and love

Those whom God employs he bring to *feel* as well as to *acknowledge* their insufficiency.

Correspondence.

SPEAKING TO CHILDREN IN THE STREETS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In your Magazine for September, I was glad to notice some very judicious and practical remarks on the subject of *speaking to scholars in the streets*, and which, I trust, will receive the careful consideration of all our fellow-labourers in the Ragged School. We are enjoined to be instant both "in season and out of season," and "as we have *opportunity* to do good unto all men." Meeting a scholar alone by the road-side presents an opportunity of speaking to him *personally* about his soul's salvation, and the few words thus spoken may be followed with the most blessed results. When our time will only admit of a word or two in passing, even this little effort God can bless.

But, Sir, I cannot help feeling that our responsibility, *as Christians*, extends far beyond the children of our Sunday School Class. Is there nothing that we can do for the many, very many, children in our land who seldom or never hear of the name of Jesus, and who "never smile when a Sabbath appears?" Yes, this we may do; as opportunity offers, tell "the old, old story" of a Saviour's love, and direct them to some Ragged School where they may learn more of their dear heavenly Friend. In their own wretched homes they are trained up in vice and ignorance, and it is therefore only when *from* home that any real good can be imparted. If any poor creatures on the face of the earth claim our pity, of a truth it is these worse than orphans.

And yet we too often pass them by without reflecting on their present sad state, and their future prospects both for time and eternity. This should not and need not be; for what more easy than to speak a few simple, loving words to a child? It requires no learning, no labour, no expenditure of time or money:—one thing only is needed—a heart of love and sympathy, a heart to feel in some degree towards others as Christ felt towards us, when he exchanged heaven's glory for Calvary's cross. Our blessed Lord would have us exercise watchfulness over our own spirits in reference to this matter, and "take heed that we despise not one of these little ones" for whom he died. One soul, however deeply sunk in ignorance and sin, is yet of priceless worth.

Let us show that we estimate its value aright, and feel how great is the honour and privilege of being permitted thus to labour for God and eternity. May the Lord lay this matter very deeply on the hearts of all his people!

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

J. G.

Notice of Meeting.

HOXTON.

A MEETING of the Committee and friends of the Hoxton Ragged Schools was held on Thursday, August 1, for the double purpose of commemorating the 21st anniversary of the Institution, and of presenting to the founders, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Ansell, a testimonial in recognition of their unremitting labours in connection with the same. A large party of friends sat down to tea; after which, J. Harman, Esq., who occupied the chair, on behalf of the Committee, presented the testimonial, which was an elegant timepiece, made expressly for the occasion, and in doing so expressed the great satisfaction he experienced in being associated with the Committee in this presentation. He had known Mr. and Mrs. Ansell for many years, and was able to bear high testimony to the excellence of their characters, and to the usefulness of their lives. Before his removal from the neighbourhood he had laboured with them as a teacher, and from his personal knowledge was convinced that the schools which they had founded were not only greatly needed, but had exerted a most beneficial influence on the locality. He encouraged them, by the remembrance of past success, to devote themselves with renewed vigour to the work in which they had been so long engaged, and trusted that the future might be attended with the same blessed result which had marked their previous efforts.

Mr. Ansell, in reply, gave a lengthened and detailed account of the origin and progress of the school. Impressed with the gross ignorance and open irreligion prevailing among the poor who occupied the courts and alleys of Hoxton, and seeing no agency at work to meet their spiritual necessities, he formed the prayerful determination to devote himself to that work. His first class was held in a brickfield on Sabbath afternoons. He afterwards secured a room, in which, despite much opposition and many discouraging circumstances, he continued to labour. He now directed his efforts to the erection of a suitable building, and having, through the generosity of the late H. C. Sturt, Esq., obtained a plot of freehold ground, the present school-rooms were at once commenced, and in April, 1850, were opened, free from debt. He rejoiced in the assurance that his efforts had not been in vain. Some of the earliest scholars had died triumphant in the faith; and others were now consistent members of Christ's Church on earth.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SATANIC JUVENILE LITERATURE.

Now that the power of reading is so diffused, it becomes of the greatest importance that the reading provided for the multitudes should not only be attractive but sound. In connection with a kindred subject, John Milton pithily asked, "What is strength without a double share of wisdom?" For the first, when not united to the last, can only terminate in social or moral ruin.

If this be the case with adults, how much more does this remark of our great epic poet apply to children! For if, instead of supplying such literature as is fitted to build up the soul, we only provide books or magazines which minister to the passions of fallen humanity, we need not wonder if vice becomes rampant, and that the child thus corrupted becomes eventually another illustration of a lost life.

Yet this picture, alas! is but a faint photograph of the popular juvenile literature of our great cities. It is not too much to affirm, that the serials which most largely circulate in the byways of London are corrupt to the core. Not rarely they are a direct *apotheosis of crime*. But, more frequently, they place vice in such a seductive light that mere girls fall before they know the terrible meaning of that word. Novel upon novel, sensational romance after romance, now fill the columns of the most popular serials, so that there is small space left for literature of a healthier character. Thus the poor child lives in an atmosphere most unreal; the contrast betwixt the every-day world and the scenes painted by the novelist causing a disappointment and a restless discontent such as few pens can adequately describe.

Let us, for example, visit the crime-gardens of London, and glance at the shops of newsvendors, who, like publicans, seem to flourish on the debasement around. Recently we copied the following list of serials in the shop-window of a house in Union-street, Southwark:—"Roving Jack, the Pirate-hunter"; "Dick Turpin, the Highwayman"; Sixteen-string Jack"; "Tom King, or the Road." Many of the songs displayed in the same shop were either filthy or vicious; being as they were either erotic or bacchanalian. Even in a shop near Camberwell Green, a most

respectable district, we recently noticed the following list of serials for youth—"Tom Turpin"; "Admiral Tom, the King of the Buccaneers"; "Spring-heeled Jack"; Tyburn Dick, the King of Highwaymen."

After perusing a list of works like the above—and they are but specimens of what we noticed in similar shops—we ask what fitter title can be given to describe their character than that which we have prefixed to this article—SATANIC JUVENILE LITERATURE? Some years ago an ex-clergyman was not ashamed to publish his infidel discourses under the title of "The Devil's Pulpit." Probably the vendors of the vile class of books just described would scarcely like to paint over their shop-fronts—"Satanic literature sold here!" Yet seeing that they do all that in them lies to indoctrinate youth with his maxims, this would be the fittest appellation.

Unhappily, the rage for this vile kind of literature seems to be growing amongst juveniles of all classes. As it "pays" both writer and publisher, sensational tales—vicious when not criminal—threaten to upset that truer view of life which says that, if we sow tare-seed, we cannot expect to gather grapes. For, as like ever produces like, out of evil moral evil *must* grow, by an inexorable law.

It is a fatal feature of such tales, that they encourage the growth of crime by investing it with all the attributes of romance. The great orator Burke once unhappily said "that vice lost half its evils by losing all its grossness." He would, however, have uttered a truer doctrine if he had said that vice always trebles its evil when it loses its grossness; as, for the units who fall when vice appears in its native hideousness, myriads are betrayed when it flaunts in painted garb.

There is, for example, no fear that youth will be tempted to the use of intoxicants when they see a ragged, drunken woman, sprawling in the gutter, cursing and swearing. Yet she was not always what she now is; but sly tippling gradually riveted the drunkard's fetters, and will, if God in grace prevent not, close her career in the drunkard's grave. So is it with the Satanic literature we have glanced at. Crime is not presented as crime, but it is slurred over or painted in such rainbow-hues that it excites the imaginations of boys and girls, who thus gradually become so initiated into what may be termed *small* crimes, that at last they stand at the bar of Newgate, full-grown criminals.

That this is no exaggerated inference, the following cases will

prove. Thus, at Marylebone police-court a boy of fourteen was charged with stealing a cash-box containing £10 and some papers. The prisoner was a page. On the 17th of last month were missed the cash-box, the money, and some valuable papers. The prisoner, who had absconded, was captured on the previous day, and from what he said, the cash-box, containing the papers only, was found behind a stove in an outhouse at the back of the house. King, 76 D, said the prisoner had formerly been in the service of a surgeon-dentist, and from that place surgical instruments had been frequently missed. Search was made for them, but they could not be found. In his drawer were found the "Exploits of Dick Turpin," the "Adventures of the Road," the "Boy Pirate," and similar publications. He was discharged from his situation, and afterwards some of the missing property was found in different parts of the house. After that he succeeded by some means in obtaining a situation in a nobleman's family, but he was soon afterwards discharged for some offence. Again, a boy whose head was scarcely visible above the front of the dock was charged before an East-end magistrate. He had stolen some goods from the outside of a shop. His guilt was clearly proved. What had he to say in his defence? Nothing but this, "Me and some of my pals have been and read 'Jack Sheppard,' and we thought that doing a robbery was a game thing."

But is there no remedy for this growing evil? or must we leave it so to blight society with its moral poison, as to render cure impossible? It is clear that an "Index" of prohibited books, like that periodically issued from the Vatican, would not answer this purpose. For it is possible that the principle might gradually be extended too far; and thus politicians in power would proscribe the works of their antagonists, or works in theology might be prohibited—not because they were adverse to the Bible—but from their being opposed to the creed of those who ruled the state. This has been done in other lands with deplorable results; in the one case, men who dared not speak in public have plotted in secret, and in the other—Spain and Rome for example—the very priesthood have become steeped to the very lips in scepticism, professing a creed they despise, simply for a morsel of bread.

The cure then of these evils, is to be found in driving out evil by good. Thus Mr. Spurgeon said in an address on Colportage, "the only way in which we can meet the damaging effects of bad books

is to scatter good ones all over the land." Thus meeting Satan with his own weapons, we shall act like Benaiah (2 Sam. xxiii. 21), who "plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear."

It is with this view that the Central Society has for many years supported the establishment of libraries in Ragged-schools. In our volume for 1861, we brought this subject more prominently before our readers; and, as a result, an impetus was given to this branch of our operations which has extended year by year. For example, in 1861, there were not fifty school libraries; but now there are no less than eighty such libraries, with nearly 15,000 volumes. The eagerness with which our scholars attend on library nights shows how much the library is appreciated; and as the books selected are healthy in tone, a taste for sound literature is so cultivated, that we need not fear that there will be a craving for books which only pander to the worst passions of fallen man.

But, even more than this, for the past seventeen years the committee of the Ragged School Union have issued monthly, "Our Children's Magazine," price one halfpenny. A steady circulation of about 85,000 copies per annum would serve to show that such a serial is needed; and that it is appreciated by our young friends many pleasing facts attest.

But, with the view of competing still further with the current Satanic juvenile literature—on the principle of so filling the mind with good as to leave no room for evil to root itself—it is intended, with the new year, to render "Our Children's Magazine" still more attractive. Thus, with a change in form which experience shows to be more attractive to children, it will be printed on toned paper, and have larger and better woodcuts than the present size permits. This, with some other improvements, will necessarily entail some additional expense. But it is not only hoped but believed that thereby the magazine will be rendered so attractive as to lead to a more extended circulation than heretofore. But to do this we must rely on our supporters, and especially on the teachers of Ragged Schools—and then we doubt not that the circulation will be doubled. Some Ragged Schools largely circulate other children's magazines; but without saying one word against these serials, we still think that "Our Children's Magazine" has the first claim upon Ragged Schools which either give or sell magazines to our scholars. For it is prepared solely with a view to elevate socially and religiously the children of the destitute or

outcast classes—though it has always been popular with children of a higher social status.

We then ask our readers to help us in our efforts to supplant the Satanic by healthy juvenile literature, especially by circulating "Our Children's Magazine" far and wide. For now that the "enemy is coming in like a flood," is the very time to lift up the standard of the Cross against him and his allies. But, in this as in all work for God, it must not be forgotten, that to-morrow may be a day too late.

SOME THINGS I SAW IN ENGLAND.

BY THE REV. W. C. VAN METER.

AGAIN and again have we attempted to give some idea of the Charities of England, but have laid down our pen, conscious of our inability to do them justice. No country can be found with such a variety of charitable institutions, for all classes, from impoverished nobility down to lame dogs and sick cats. British brain, heart, and purse have been taxed for centuries to discover the best way to punish the guilty, reclaim the erring, protect those exposed to danger, and relieve the suffering. No nation can muster such an army of philanthropists as this, composed of all classes, from the Earl of Shaftesbury down to "Marian," the Bible Woman of the "Missing Link."

They bid "God-speed" to every earnest effort to do good, from the Queen down to the most obscure, but earnest worker. "Work your own way if you like, only *work*," seems to be the feeling everywhere. No matter what may be the difference in creed or social position, whether the noble Earl of Shaftesbury, pleading before the House of Lords for poor little children in the factory or in the mine, or "Brother Stevens," who cannot read a word yet gathering together his congregation of dirt-sifters, rag-pickers, and the most illiterate and humble labourers, that he may point them to Christ. All are one in Christ, and they rejoice in each other's success.

During my visit to Great Britain, I did not hear one person speak an unkind word against his fellow who was connected with a different institution. True, they often differed widely and earnestly, but respectfully; an example worthy of imitation.

Had I seen but one or two charities, I could attempt a description of them; but how shall I speak of one and not of all, without seeming injustice? The labours of the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the Societies over which he presides, would make a library. Go through the various houses erected or remodelled for the poor among the labouring classes, and you will feel that all of London's charity surely must have exhausted itself on these. Sit down and talk with Mr. Gent, Secretary of the Ragged School Union, and then with Mr. Ford, Secretary of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and you will be amazed at what is being done by those Societies throughout the kingdom, and you will wonder if the last needy child has not been provided for.

Visit Field Lane Ragged School—the model of its kind in England. Go

through its schoolrooms, class-rooms, lodgings for men, boys, women, girls; its shoe and tailor shops, home for girls out of work, baths, dining-rooms, &c. Look at the 150,000 received there in 23 years; learn their history, see the multitudes saved, and you will be silent in grateful wonder.

Go and talk with Mrs. Ranyard of her work, her Bible-women—view her 274 chapels or rooms in which these Bible-women gather poor mothers and wayward girls, and talk to them, read and pray with them, warn and encourage them, and lead them to our Saviour. Not less than 10,000 of this class of women are thus gathered into these little chapels every Sunday. I know of no woman on earth who seems to be doing more good than she is. Yet all this is carried on without any Society or complicated machinery.

Sit down and let your whole soul be thrilled as you listen to Mr. Stabb relating his sixteen years' experience in rescuing the fallen, and the success of the midnight meetings, and you will feel that none can fall too low to be reached and saved.

But all England's charities are not found in London. They are in every village, town, and city. Bristol is justly styled the "City of Charities." The Kingswood Reformatory is, in many respects, the *model* in England. Mr. Barker, the Superintendent, understands his work, and loves it. The "Red Maid's School" (so called from the scarlet dress they are compelled to wear by the terms of the bequest that supports it) is the most beautiful school I saw in England. Everything connected with it blended most happily the useful and the beautiful.

The Orphan Houses, by George Muller, did not meet my expectations. For years my heart has been encouraged by the narrative of his simple faith, and I imagined that when I visited the place I should see everything about it as beautiful. But how disappointed! True, the buildings are large, well-built, and clean. The children seem to be comfortably fed and clothed, and everything was oppressively orderly. But, much as I admire his faith and business tact, I did not admire his taste. I would never put on those dear little orphans the badge of degradation; I mean blue check. Those bright eyes should not be covered under a gloomy scoop bonnet. I would treat them like other children. I would not ignore carpets, pictures, and harmoniums, but I would make this the most lovely spot on earth to these unfortunate little ones; and in so doing, I should not expect to have my faith weakened, or God's blessing withheld, nor contributions less abundant. I would not compel those little ones to remain, and the public be taxed for their support, until they are seventeen years old. I seriously question the wisdom and justice of long confinement, even in an orphanage. God has ordained the Christian family as the best institution in which to train children. I felt as I turned away that while there was much to admire, still our dear brother Muller made a sad mistake in not employing more of the beautiful in his work. These dear little orphans will not be made worse by cheerful dressing, beautiful flowers, instructive pictures, and sweet music.

But there is another side. Go with me to the Infirmary for Sick Children, established through the earnest labours of Mark Whitwill. It is neither large nor expensive, but it is just such as one would expect a tender loving father with ample means would provide for his own; nay, more, for our Saviour's little ones. When I visited it, it seemed more like a home for

fairies than a hospital for sick children. Mothers and sisters seem to have taxed their love and ingenuity to provide toys and sources of amusement to make these little sufferers forget their pain and the absence of their mothers. God bless the hearts that contrive such a place for poor little sick children!

But I must stop, for this is too long already. Everywhere I went I was welcomed, and every facility afforded me for seeing *what* they do and *how* they do it. But there are important institutions I did not visit; and now that the Board deem it proper, I expect to leave ere long for Great Britain and the Continent, to continue my examination of their Reformatory and Charitable Institutions, that I may return better fitted for the important work in which I have been so long engaged at home. May God watch over my own little wanderers and fellow-labourers during my absence!

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF COSTERMONGERS.

With the Costermongers of London (says the *Scripture Readers' Journal*), the marriage tie is, in too many instances, dispensed with altogether! Church, chapel, and registry are alike disregarded. As soon as they attain the age of fifteen or sixteen years, they begin to look about them for a partner; and having taken a fancy to one, they mutually agree to live together for a month "on trial," as their expression is. During the month's probation he is bound to treat her well and kindly; but after the month is gone he may treat her as he pleases, and none will interfere, or he may turn her off, and take another, as before, "on trial."

"One of the better class," says a Reader, "whom I had visited for ten years, I found, to my surprise and sorrow, had never been married during all that time. Discovering at length that the society in which he had insured his life would not pay the woman the amount insured unless they were man and wife, he married her (a short time only before his death), and thus secured the payment of the money." This man was one of the very few who did not trade on the Sunday, but alas! it was not from love to the Lord, whose day it is. The man recognised the privilege and blessing of a weekly rest of the body, but altogether failed to appreciate the greater blessing of the hallowed services of the Sabbath.

In many instances, the Scripture Readers have been instrumental in inducing couples to be married who have been living together for more or less lengthened periods in an unmarried state, and their gratitude for having been led out of a state of sin is sometimes very touching. One party, for instance, has ever since been in the habit of occasionally presenting the clergyman's wife with a bouquet "of their own growing." Another could not, for some time, be induced to accept payment for some pots of musk purchased by the Scripture Reader. A third insisted upon paying the usual fees, though he could only do it by instalments, the last of which he paid long after the marriage. A fourth, deeply sensible of the benefit, sent the Reader's little girl a stool "made by himself." It is worthy of remark, in this last case, that the man, immediately after the Reader's visit, started off to put up the banns, *lest the good impressions should wear away*. But here his good intentions received a most unexpected check; for though he could give

his own name and condition, he could not give those of his partner, with whom he had lived for years!

In a community where ignorance almost universally prevails, where 75 per cent. probably can neither read nor write; whose besetting sins are drunkenness, profanity, and obscenity of speech, Sabbath-breaking, and the one of which we have just been speaking, who can overstate the effects of daily example upon the rising generation? The evils of the parents are perpetuated in the children, who grow up uncared-for and untaught, with all the influences for evil around them. Being put to work as soon as they can carry a basket or mind a stall, what marvel that they should adopt the manners and bearings of their elders, and very early in life become Costermongers in miniature? Who has not been struck, in passing through the streets, with the shocking language of these youngsters, when speaking to each other? Oaths and expressions which are absolutely appalling flow from their mouths like water. Left almost entirely to their own resources from their earliest infancy, they acquire a vast amount of shrewdness and cunning, ripening in after years into bold audacity. They are thus early tutored to vice, and taught to break God's laws, which often leads to breaches of the laws of man, till at length, it may be, they are led to join the ranks of the London thieves and characters of the worst description, and ruin becomes imminent. It is only reasonable to expect that the language of the Costermonger should be the language of the children. As the one speaks, so the others learn to speak. This rather pleases than shames the parents, and instead of bringing down upon them a rebuke, rather gives rise to a smile of approbation! If you venture to speak to them on the subject, they will at once stand up for their children, and tell you unblushingly, that it is "manly," and that they *like* to see them so capable of taking their own part!

The forlorn, dejected appearance of the children generally is very saddening. Some of them seem as if the little life they have in them is withering and dying out, ere almost it has begun to bloom—crushed under the iron hand of poverty, long before they know what poverty means. No look of childish innocence beaming on happy little faces greets you as you enter. In place of all this is a miserable wreck of fallen humanity, blighted with the withering blast of sin, sorrow, and suffering, growing old, and almost decaying before it has begun to shoot forth into life and vigour.

As a rule, *all* the children of Costermongers are brought up to their fathers' business. These are the "Costermongers proper," in whom the calling has become hereditary, and who, it is computed, compose one-half of the entire class. A clergyman mentions an old lady of his acquaintance who had a stall in Whitecross Street. "She had had," he says, "fourteen children, all of whom were in early life brought up to the streets." Some of them died; the rest married, and have large families engaged in the trade; one daughter had fourteen children; one granddaughter has already had nine children, though only thirty-one years of age. The three generations have all got their living in the streets. Of another family the grandfather was hung at Horsemonger Lane Gaol, the son was a professed body-snatcher, lived with his step-sister, and had five children, all with families and all Costermongers. Another man had seven children, all with families, without being married, and all Costermongers.

A good pugilist is looked up to with great admiration by the Costers, and fighting is considered to be a necessary part of a boy's education. Hence it is important for a lad and even a girl to know how to "work their fists well," as expert boxing is called among them. If a Coster man or woman is struck they are *obliged* to fight. When a quarrel takes place between two boys, a ring is formed, and the men urge them on to "have it out." Some lads have been imprisoned a dozen times for attacks upon the police, with whom they are at continual war. They will wait for months following a policeman who has offended them, anxiously looking out for an opportunity of paying back the injury. One boy, we are told, vowed vengeance against a member of the force, and for six months never allowed the man to escape his notice. At length, one night, he saw the policeman in a row outside a public-house, and running into the crowd, kicked him savagely, shouting at the same time in language which it is quite impossible for us to repeat. When the boy heard that he was injured for life, his joy was great, and he declared the twelve months' imprisonment he was sentenced to for the offence to be "dirt cheap." The whole of the court where the lad resided sympathised with the boy, and vowed to a man that, had he escaped, they would have subscribed to send him into the country until the affair had blown over, for he had shown himself a "plucky one."

In some districts, happily, the children are got into Ragged Schools. And not unfrequently they have turned out well when brought under better influences than those of home. The very moment of their being taken away from their parents, and being placed in the Industrial School, is the commencement of better things. They strive to deserve, and thus in the course of time merit, a character, which, in its turn, introduces them to a situation of respectability, and they become steady, useful, and honourable members of society. These children may sometimes be seen reading to their parents, or to their elder brothers and sisters, out of the Bible, or New Testament, which they have obtained at school for their tickets. And a father or mother will often show to a visitor, evidently with real satisfaction, the Book which the little ones have procured in this way. But the children of Costermongers are not only to be found at Ragged Schools, but they are also to be seen at the Sunday School, notwithstanding the parent, or parents, are selling in the streets that day.

One instance we may give, in pleasing contrast to the generality of "Costers'" homes. Entering the room, our Reader was struck with its clean, orderly, neat appearance. In it were five or six children, all clean and neatly dressed. He could see at once that this was a well-regulated household, that the children were not only not neglected, but were being well and carefully brought up. They were, indeed, as he soon discovered to his great joy, being brought up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," for the mother had learnt the blessedness of obedience to the Divine injunction, and the preciousness of the promise attached, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In this case one of the little girls, about ten or eleven years of age, read a portion of the Word out of *her own* Bible, the Reader listening, and occasionally introducing a word of exhortation.

TRAINING REFUGE FOR RAGGED-SCHOOL GIRLS.

THIS institution, says the *Christian Times*, at 1, Lisson Street, Marylebone Road, is very deserving of notice, not only on account of the vast good it has done and is doing, but also because it is the first Refuge established in London for girls from Ragged Schools.

To give some idea of its working, I may mention that, out of 347 cases admitted since the commencement of the Refuge, 148 have left for service, 124 returned to their friends, 18 been transferred to other institutions, 1 emigrated, 16 died, 2 taken by a lady to the Cape, 5 dismissed, and 33 remain in the establishment.

When I visited the Refuge I was shown the Case Book, containing the names of girls admitted, and the reason for their admission. It is a sad and solemn book withal. Every page teems with misery and profligacy, and many pages show the humanity displayed even by the very poor. A few extracts taken at random from this book will show the sort of cases which claim the attention of this institution. A girl, eight years old, whose father is a tramp, is brought before the magistrate charged with vagrancy, and is sent hither. Girls who are guilty of only very petty thefts are received. As for example, one whose parents are both alive, but who bestowed on her no parental care, falls into evil courses, and is prevailed on by wicked companions to steal twopence from a till. In the above cases the Home Office allows a certain sum weekly for the keep of the girls.

In the following case the girl was admitted free. She was ten years of age, and an orphan. A neighbour who attended the death-bed of the mother promised to take care of her child. She kept her promise faithfully and for a long time, until her husband fell into ill-health and was likely to die, and she became no longer able to support the child. The case became known to the Rev. W. B. Mackenzie, whose National Sunday School the girl had attended, and he was successful in finding a home for her in the Refuge.

But I shift from the sad to the bright side of my subject. What have been the results of this charity? The after-career of many of these destitute ones is the best reply! One goes into service, and has been in her present and only situation for nine years. Her sister has held three situations during six years, and is now going into the fourth year of her last engagement. One who had been admitted because her mother was dead, and who was forsaken by her drunken father, left last year to go with her uncle and aunt, both Christian people, to New Zealand. A missionary on his round of duty enters a low public-house; he sees a woman rolling about, helplessly drunk, and discovers her emaciated child asleep between two beer-barrels. This worse than motherless girl, is, through his endeavours, admitted into the Refuge, where she remains four years. She is now a lady's-maid, earning her eighteen guineas yearly, and is much beloved by her mistress. The matron considers her as perhaps the best girl she ever had charge of; indeed, she is quite proud of her.

Several of the girls have been respectably married; and one who has been so, and is now with her husband in America, writes to the matron:—"Mine has been an eventful life; more so, I think, than any of your flock. I have

been the black sheep. Your letters always seem to have a good influence over me now, for I often need some beacon to guide me."

The kind matron and her charges, after they go out into the world, seldom cease their friendship for each other. Sometimes *she* may lose sight of some of them for a year or two; but, in the end, *they* are sure either to call upon or to write to her. She gives me the cheering information that, of all who have come under her care, not quite two-thirds, but certainly more than one-half, have done well.

The Refuge receives cases from all parts of the country. I was shown a note concerning one from Deal. The child, only eight years old, was motherless. Her father was a dreadful drunkard, and used to drag the poor little half-starved girl about with him into the vile dens which he frequented. His sleeping-place was a hut, unfit for human dwelling. A policeman, who was set to watch the inhuman father lest he should desert his offspring, prevailed upon him to give her up, and she was received under the kindly roof of Lisson Street.

I am tempted to tell of many instances of the good results of the Refuge, but this must be the last. A girl, from the age of six, had been trained by her mother to pick pockets in omnibuses and elsewhere. After her mother's death, a woman employed her in a similar way; and, as she told the matron, "Sometimes I got a lot of money, but she took it all from me." In this course of crime she passed six years of her life, until she was committed by the magistrate to the Refuge. Her eldest brother had been happily taken from his mother's keeping when a child, and brought up by his Christian grandfather in America. He went to the gold-diggings in California. He was fortunate in finding a large quantity of gold. Converting it into money, he came to seek for his brothers, and take them to their grandmother's home. He traced this girl to 1, Lisson Street, where she had been taught to know the evil of sin. When she was about to leave, with her brother, she shed grateful tears on parting with the matron, to whom also the brother expressed his gratitude in a heartfelt manner. The scene was a most touching one.

I shall best conclude by quoting the report for the present year, of the Rev. Sydney Turner, who inspects this Refuge, which is certified under the Industrial Schools Act. "I find the Institution in thorough good order, the girls looking well and healthy. They have passed a very good examination, and show much intelligence. The appearance and manner of the children, and the general working of the Institution, are very satisfactory. *I can only wish that the school was more liberally supported, and enabled to extend its influence over a wider sphere,*"—a wish which I am certain will find an echo in the hearts of all true believers in Him who came to save "what was lost."

ABEL SUNNYSIDE.

HOW A STREET-BOY WAS RECLAIMED.

AN American minister was one day walking on a Sunday morning to his Sunday School, and as he turned the corner of a little narrow street, a short way to his school, he saw a parcel of little boys—Arabs of the street—engaged playing at marbles. They saw him as he came, and as they saw him

the greater part of them got up their marbles, and in a moment were off like a shot before he could reach them. One little boy did not happen to see the minister at first, and before he could get his marbles, or muster his strength to make off, the minister had him. Then came the grand question, What was to be said? what was to be done? There were confronted, face to face, the minister of Christ and the little ignorant, dark, benighted child. Now, many a one would have said, "Oh! you little Sabbath-breaker, you deserve to be punished;" or others, "You are found out in your bad ways; you had better come along with me." But this true minister of Christ was not a man of that kind. He was one of those who knew that kindness, tenderness, and affection were the way to get at the heart, and he said to the little boy, "Have you found all your marbles?"

"No, sir," said the child, "there is one I have not found."

"Then," said the minister, "I will try and help you to find it:" so they both stooped down and searched, and they found the marble at last.

"Are you fond of playing marbles, my boy?" was the next question.

"Yes, sir, I am."

"So used I to be," said the minister; "and I think I could play still. I think I could beat you myself if we were to have a game, only I never play on a Sunday."

The poor little boy's countenance expanded. He looked with confidence at the kind man who spoke to him, and he thought, "I have found not an enemy, but a friend."

"If you will come with me, my boy," said the minister, "I will bring you to a place where you will see something better than playing marbles, and hear something you will like to hear." He was told it was to the Sunday School, and after a little hesitation he said he would go, but that he was so dirty he was not fit to go. "Then," said the minister, "here is a pump, at which you can wash your face and hands."

"But I cannot pump and wash," said the boy.

The minister pumped, and the boy washed, and he gave him his handkerchief to dry himself with, which the boy took, after hesitating on the ground that it was so clean. He then took the minister's hand, and they proceeded to the Sunday School. When they got near it the busy hum of voices through the windows startled him, and he was afraid to go in, saying that the boys would laugh at him and make fun of him. "Another time I will go, sir, but not now." Here was the crisis of the boy's life. "I promise you," said the minister, "that if you come in they shall not laugh at you, or turn you to jest. Take my hand, and come." He did so, and the minister brought him to one of the most experienced teachers in the school, and told him the story. The boy was treated kindly. He came regularly afterwards, and learned to read and study the Scriptures. His father and mother were poor, drunken, profligate people, and were glad that the boy should be noticed, so they did not object. By-and-by he became one of the sharpest boys in the school, was afterwards apprenticed, and after some time the minister lost sight of him, and he never saw his face for twenty years.

One day, as he passed through the streets of Philadelphia, he saw a gentlemanly looking man, who stopped him and said, "Sir, do you not know me?" "No, I do not." "Ah! do you not remember twenty years ago

finding a little boy in the street playing marbles, speaking to him kindly, pumping for him while he washed, and bringing him to your Sunday School? Sir, I am that boy. The world has since gone well with me: I have prospered in business, and, through the blessing of God, possess a considerable fortune. All that I am, and all that I have, I owe, under God, to your kindness, your wise kindness, your aggressive kindness, in laying hold of me by the shoulder that day, and treating me kindly, tenderly; not rebuking me, not being hard with me, but dealing gently with me, holding me by the hand, and treating me as I was—an ignorant, poor, worthless creature, who knew nothing, and with whom it would have been useless to deal otherwise."

PRESENTATION TO MR. MOUNSTEPHEN.

On Wednesday evening, October 2, an event of an interesting character took place in connection with Field Lane Ragged School, upon the occasion of holding the usual autumn conference. It was the presentation to Mr. Mounstephen, for twenty-one years superintendent of the Bible Schools of the institution, of a handsome testimonial in commemoration of his long and valuable services, and as a tribute of the warm esteem in which he has been held during so long a period by the committee and teachers of the school. A similar expression of esteem was manifested towards Mrs. Mounstephen, and to Mr. R. W. Mounstephen, their son, whose removal into the suburbs with Mr. Mounstephen, and consequent severance from a regular attendance at the institution, is the cause of so much regret. There were present at the conference a large number of ladies, who during the proceedings industriously plied their needle in the construction of garments of a varied description, to be distributed among the poor during the coming winter. Amongst those who took part in the interesting proceedings were Mr. T. Brooker, presiding; Mr. E. J. Hytche, of the Ragged School Union; Mr. Baldwin, of New York; Mr. S. Tawell; and Messrs. Kirby, Griffith, W. Payne, &c.

Mr. Tawell, on behalf of the committee, said: There is one special matter which will come prominently before you at the latter part of the evening, which cannot fail in the minds of old Field Lane teachers to stir up early and most interesting recollections, and, furthermore, to occasion very deep regret. It is only referred to now as explaining to the teachers the course which has been adopted by the committee, and which has been thoroughly endorsed by the teachers—we allude to the resignation of Mr. Mounstephen, so long the able and devoted superintendent of the Bible Schools. The service of twenty-one years can never be forgotten, nor can the results of such protracted labour be hidden in this world, or lost in the world to come. The long experience thus gathered, and constantly turned to account, makes it a most difficult thing judiciously to fill up the vacancy. The committee have therefore determined to wait upon God, and for several weeks constantly to seek by prayer the Divine direction. Most earnestly do we ask the dear teachers and friends to meet them under the banner of the Cross for this object; to unite with them in this one simple

desire to be led by the Almighty in making their choice of his successor. This departure from the City on the part of Mr. Mounstephen necessarily takes away his excellent partner Mrs. Mounstephen, whose constant care and diligence has done so much in developing the Girls' Industrial Class. The only consolation we can gather from her departure lies in the hope that her health will be benefited by this change.

The Chairman then presented to Mr. Mounstephen a time-piece, and said that as he looked upon the dial-plate, and recognised in it the index of the works within, he would perceive thereon a token of his own good works which so forcibly reminded his friends of the internal working of his own heart. He would also be reminded thereby of the rapid flight of time, and of the place that now knew us, but which must soon pass away and know us no more for ever. He did hope that though their friend was, in the providence of God, temporarily removed from his accustomed sphere of labour, they might be able to devise some means whereby they would claim his valuable services from time to time. But even though thus removed from them, if he knew anything at all of his character, he was sure Mr. Mounstephen would not rest idly in the place to which he had removed. The cry was everywhere still, "The harvest is plenty, but the labourers are few," and no doubt God would find something for his servant to do down at Shepherd's Bush, where he had taken up his abode. Having presented the testimonial to Mr. Mounstephen, the Chairman said that the committee and teachers scarcely less regretted the departure from amongst them of Mrs. Mounstephen, the estimable wife of their friend, and as a token of the esteem in which that lady was held in the institution, he had much pleasure in presenting her with the elegant and beautiful cushion before him, which was the work of the Industrial Class, and with a tea-urn which was the gift of the ladies of the institution. He had yet another pleasant task to perform, and that was to present Mr. R. W. Mounstephen, the son of those estimable parents, with a very useful book, as a testimonial from the committee and teachers of their appreciation of his services in the school. The Chairman then presented to Mr. Mounstephen, jun., a handsome copy of the "Bible Cyclopædia," and concluded by expressing a hearty wish that the blessing of God might long rest upon father, mother, and son, and that when they passed away from the scene of their earthly labours they would enter into the joy of their Lord, and have their ears gladdened with the welcome sound—"Well done, good and faithful servants."

The testimonials consisted of a beautifully-wrought time-piece, an elegant tea-urn, a rich and beautiful cushion, artistically designed, of richly-coloured diamond-shaped pieces of velvet, and a copy of the "Bible Cyclopædia." Inscribed on an ivory plate on the pedestal of the timepiece was the following:—"Presented to Mr. Mounstephen, Oct. 2, 1867, by the committee and teachers of the Field Lane Ragged Schools, on the occasion of his resignation of the office of superintendent, which he had most efficiently filled for twenty-one years."

Mr. Mounstephen briefly expressed the great delight which such expressions of their esteem afforded him, and said he was really at a loss for language in which to tell them how much he was surprised and amazed at such marks of their kindness towards him. It had been the pride of his life

to feel and to know that he enjoyed the confidence and good wishes of the teachers and others with whom he had associated in this work, and he was sure that on his part such feelings had been sincerely reciprocated. He then referred to the vast good which had been accomplished by their institution from the commencement, there having passed through it no less than 150,000 mortal beings, of all ages and descriptions. Allusion had been made to the anxiety of mind connected with such work. He could assure them that he had never had any anxiety as to the result of the work, because he had always felt a deeply-rooted conviction that God would undoubtedly honour it, and none of them would ever know a tithe of the blessed results until they stood before the Master in the other world. He could not forbear to tell them that the present moment was one in which he experienced feelings of a very mixed character, for whilst he was delighted at such a mark of their esteem for him, he felt a regret at the thought of resigning his official position amongst them. He could assure them, however, that he would come amongst them whenever he possibly could, and would be only too glad to do anything which lay in his power either for the promotion of the welfare of the institution generally, or of any individual connected with it. In conclusion, he warmly thanked them on behalf of his wife and his son, and said he should at all times be glad to see any of their pleasant faces at the place of his new abode.

AGRICULTURAL GANG LABOUR.

In our last number, p. 217, we directed the attention of our readers to the social and moral evils incident to premature juvenile labour in our large workshops. This system is not, however, confined to our overgrown cities and their huge factories, but in Lincolnshire and other fenny counties child labour, in the form of agricultural gangs, is too much in vogue, and that amid associations of the most debasing character. These evils are not restricted to country towns, but have a *direct* influence on the London ragged population. For, on testing several London Ragged Schools, we found that above a moiety of the parents came from the country. Thus, it appears, that as we have not only to contend with vices of home growth, but with those which are special to country villages, any social evils which affect the agricultural population equally affect that of large towns.

It appears that this agricultural gang system was produced by the sudden subjection of waste lands to cultivation. Labour, with a home near the work to be done, has been massed into gangs—gangs of men, women, and children —so much muscle and sinew—this and nothing more. The gang system has debased all who have been connected with it. In the eastern counties the land is reclaimed; but no roof has been raised for the labourer. So cruel has the gang-system—this indiscriminate massing of labour—proved, that Parliament could not permit its continuance. The gang-masters are unscrupulous men, who farm from their parents large numbers of boys and girls, paying them as little, and charging the land-owners as much, as possible. An Act for the regulation of agricultural gangs is, however, to come into operation next New Year's-day. It will mitigate the evils of a scandalous

system that has been permitted to grow up in our midst. It is creditable to the House of Commons, that in the tumult of the great Parliamentary Reform session, it found time to deal with this social grievance; but it is not the less a disgrace to us that such a social sore should have been permitted to grow.

It is provided that no child under the age of eight years shall be employed in any agricultural gang; and that no women shall be massed in the same gang with men. Is it not a national disgrace that such a restriction was necessary? Let the reader imagine a babe, eight years old, in a gang, tumbled out of the cradle into the field! Again, the new Act provides that in every instance where females are employed, a licensed female gang-mistress must be present. And now for the penalties. "Any gang-master employing any child, young person, or woman, in contravention of the Act, and any occupier of land on which such employment shall take place, unless it can be proved that it occurred without his knowledge, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 20s. for each person so engaged." The fine is insignificant; in the case of the occupier of the land the law will prove inoperative, for the gang will be always without his knowledge. No beer or excisable liquor-seller can take a license as a gang-master. These provisions of the new Act will mitigate the present immoral consequences of gang labour, and lead, we trust, to its ultimate extinction. For as at present conducted, it causes the moral and religious ruin of hundreds of female children, and must have proved a fertile source of social discord.

METROPOLITAN DISPENSARIES FOR THE POOR.

As most of our leading hospitals are planted miles from the Ragged School districts, our teachers are often puzzled to advise the parents of sick scholars where to send them for medical treatment. Dispensaries, too, are more common where they are least needed; a large proportion being found in the west of London. It may then be feared that not a few poor children either die from want of proper medical care, or become subjected to those chronic disorders which render life miserable.

What is needed is this—that dispensaries should be accessible to the sick poor of every parish; and for this to be accomplished, they must be planted in their very midst. We are glad, therefore, to find that these evils will be mitigated by that very important part of the new Metropolitan Poor Act which provides for the establishment of dispensaries for the relief of the sick out-door poor. It is about to be put in force, and intimation to that effect has been officially given to the boards of guardians.

The following are the leading principles upon which the Poor Law Board proposes to act. These dispensaries must either be in separate buildings, or a suitable part of the workhouse may be set apart; but to each there must be a resident dispenser, and qualified medical officers will attend at stated hours to prescribe for at their dwellings such as are not able to attend the dispensaries. The medicines and appliances for the dispensaries will be provided by the guardians, and the establishment will be under the management of a committee to be elected by the guardians, either from among themselves or ratepayers qualified to be guardians. The entire cost of these dispensaries and

the medical officers will be defrayed out of the common fund, to be levied *pro ratâ* over the metropolis. Thus a sufficient supply of all necessary and proper medicine and medical appliances will be ensured for the destitute poor at fixed hours, and within easy reach; the medical officer will not be shackled by any contract for supplying the drugs prescribed; also an organization will be provided thereby which will be easily capable of expansion in case of epidemic.

This Act will be in every respect a great boon to the poor, to whom sickness means not only loss of health but loss of work.

The Poet's Corner.

THE DAY LABOURER.

BY ANNA SHIPTON.

Sow ye beside all waters,
Where the dew of heaven may fall;
Ye shall reap if ye be not weary,
For the Spirit breathes o'er all.

Sow ye beside all waters,
With a blessing and a prayer;
Name Him whose hand upholds thee,
And sow thou everywhere.

Sow when the sunlight sheddeth
Its warm and cheering ray;
For the rain of Heaven descendeth,
When the sunbeams pass away.

Sow when the tempest lowers,
For calmer days will break;
And the seed, in darkness nourished,
A goodly plant may make.

Sow when the morning breaketh
In beauty o'er the land;
And when the evening falleth,
Withhold not thou thine hand.

Sow, though the rock repel thee,
In its cold and sterile pride;
Some cleft there may be riven,
Where the little seed may hide.

Fear not, for some will flourish,
And though the tares abound,
Like the willows by the waters,
Will the scattered grain be found.

Work while the daylight lasteth,
Ere the shades of night come on;
Ere the Lord of the vineyard cometh,
And the labourer's work is done.

Work in the wild waste places,
Though none thy love may own;
God guides the down of the thistle,
The wandering wind hath sown.

On!—with thine heart in heaven,
Thy strength—thy Master's might;
Till the wild waste places blossom,
In the warmth of a Saviour's light.

Sow by the wayside gladly,
In the dark damp caverns low,
Where sunlight seldom reacheth,
Nor healthful streamlets flow:

Where the withering air of poison
Is the young bud's earliest breath;
And the wild unwholesome blossom
Bears in its beauty—"Death."

The ground impure, o'ertrodden
By life's disfiguring years,
Though blood and guilt have stained it,
May yet be soft from tears.

Watch not the clouds above thee;
Let the whirlwind round thee sweep;
God may the *seed*-time give thee,
But another's hand may *reap*.

Have faith, though ne'er beholding
The seed burst from its tomb:
Thou knowest not which may perish,
Or what be spared to bloom.

Room on the narrowest ridges
The ripened grain will find,
That the Lord of the harvest coming,
In the harvest sheaves may bind.

THE SOUL AUCTION.

ERRATUM.—*For* "J. De Fraine," p. 210, *read* "Charles Mackay."

The Teachers' Column.

THE WOODEN END OF THE PLANK.

MEN are not made great so often by the advantages they have, as by their improving them. A college cannot make a scholar unless the young man studies. In a certain sense, then, every man is self-made. An American general was once a common workman in a factory. He held some of the highest offices in the State, and won imperishable honours in the army.

He tells us that, one morning, as the factory was lighted up before light in the early dawn, and just as objects could be seen out of the door, he was looking out of the window, and saw an object moving along on the ice that covered the river. While watching it, suddenly the ice broke, and the dark object went down. In an instant he thought it must be a man. So, calling a companion, he ran down stairs and out towards the object. He had the forethought to snatch up a plank, which he carried on his shoulder. When they had reached the place, they found it was a coloured man, who had broken through the ice, and was struggling for his life. They thrust out the plank. The poor fellow seized it with both hands.

"Now hold on, Tim! and we'll pull you out."

So they pulled and got him *almost* out, when off he slipped and went down again! On his coming up they pushed the end of the plank to him again, and cried,—"Now, Tim! hold on with all your might."

"Indeed I will, sir."

Again they pulled, and up, up he came, almost out, when off he slipped, and down he went. They felt that the third time must be the turning point. It was now life or death. Poor Tim looked as if he thought so too. For the third time the plank was pushed out, when the negro cried out,

"*Oh, gentlemen, give me the wooden end of the plank!*"

They saw instantly that they had been giving him the end covered all over with ice, and no wonder he could not cling to it! They now gave him what he called the "wooden end," and drew him out with safety.

When we see teachers who have nothing but a hard way towards their children, who are always finding fault, but never commending them even when they do well; who never seem to see when the child tries to do well, and when he longs for words of kindness, we have great pity for such children. We wish these teachers would remember that children cannot have the judgment, the forethought, and the sobriety of many years. They are children. Don't give them the *icy end of the plank!* They love your approbation. They rejoice to have you give them deserved commendation. Oh, give them the *wooden end of the plank!*

There is little Ned Smith in the Ragged School. He is in Mr. Steadman's class. Now Mr. Steadman is so old that he must wear glasses. All his youthful feelings have long since been gone. He has lived little Ned's life over at least six times. Now Ned is a short tough little fellow, full of life and fun, who don't love to study or to think much. He partly fears and partly dislikes Mr. Steadman. They have nothing in common. The one has no childhood about him, and the other has no manhood. The one is sober and staid, and the other is full of fun. And Ned would try, and he would do better if he were treated gently, and willingly, and loving. He wants somebody to encourage him. Oh, Mr. Steadman, do give him the *wooden end of the plank!*

The Children's Gallery.

NELLY, THE BLIND GIRL.

Poor little Nelly was much to be pitied. Not only was she an orphan, bereaved of both her parents while still too young to remember either of them, but it had pleased God to deprive her during a severe illness of the use of her eyes. Nelly was blind.

Can you fancy, dear children, what a trial that must be? Never to see the faces that you love, nor the sun in God's heaven, nor the flowers of the field! Truly, it must be a heavy trial. And so poor Nelly found it. There was little in her grandmother's dark room or narrow court, that could have given her much pleasure to look upon, but still the darkness of her eyes added sorely to the gloom that hung about her dwelling; and Nelly often shed tears in secret because she was blind.

Maggie was tolerably kind to her little grandchild; but, when out of humour, she too would murmur loud enough for the child to hear her, for blind people's ears are very quick. "What a pity it was that the child could do nothing for her own living, or even to help her poor granny." And yet Nelly did her best; she could dress herself as neatly as many a little girl that can see, and could find her way about on many errands for her poor old grandmother.

One day a young lady came to the house in which Maggie and Nelly lived. She was a kind, good young lady, who went about to visit all she heard of in distress, and help them as far as she was able. She was very much struck with the melancholy condition of poor Nelly, and sitting down in the wretched room, she began to talk to her of her troubles, and then she read a chapter out of the Bible to her about our blessed Lord opening the eyes of the blind man. Nelly listened, and wished in her little heart that she had lived in those days. The young lady seemed to guess her thoughts, for she said, "Nelly, would not you like to have your eyes opened?"

"Oh yes, ma'am," said Nelly, with a full heart.

Then the young lady explained to her how Jesus still waits to open the eyes of all those whose darkness makes itself felt; that in a spiritual, if not a natural way, he would open Nelly's eyes, to see far greater wonders than were hidden from her by her blindness in this world of ours. And she taught the little girl to pray daily, with the blind man of old, "Lord, open thou mine eyes!"

She also took much pains from that day forward to look after the poor blind child, and succeeded in getting her into a school for a few months, where she was not only taught to work and make baskets, but, what was far better, to read the word of God. On leaving the school, Nelly had a copy of St. John's Gospel, printed for the blind, presented to her; and with that precious gift light indeed did come down into the darkness of poor Nelly's mind. She learned to pray with all her heart for the light of truth, and not only to herself, but to her poor old grandmother. Was not that a gift from God? Peace, love, and contentment came into that gloomy court and dingy room.

Yes, and light too came into little Nelly's closed eyes. Her heart was filled with such lovely images of joy and beauty that she ceased to lament her blindness to this outer world; and many who had the full blessing of eye-sight would often come to sit an hour with Nelly, to hear her talk to them of heaven and its brightness. For they said that it brought light to their darkness to hear the blind girl's happy words.

WHAT A FARTHING BANK DID.

THERE are nearly 100 Penny Banks conducted in the London Ragged Schools, with above 13,000 depositors. But recently some kind teachers have opened *Farthing* Banks. They have been found to please the children very much, who amongst other good lessons learn to lay by for that "rainy day" which sooner or later comes to all.

Many, too, who are little more than infants, have been able to buy clothes, and some even to buy bread for their starving parents. Thus, a little girl went to the manager of the Farthing Bank belonging to George Yard Ragged School, Whitechapel, and said, "If you please, I want to draw out my threepence-halfpenny."

"And what are you going to do with it?" was asked.

She replied, "Mother is ill; there is nothing at home to eat, and I want to buy a two-pound loaf. I put by my farthings to buy a pinafore; but I must go without, and buy some bread."

Correspondence.

SPEAKING TO CHILDREN IN THE STREETS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—Having read in your valuable Magazine a letter on the subject of conversing with children in the street, I have taken the liberty to forward you the following fact, which came under my notice a few days ago, showing that souls may be saved by this means.

A friend of mine asked a little girl if she loved Jesus. She replied, "Yes, I do;" but in such a way that it was evident she did not think what she was saying. As they walked along my friend told her that she was afraid she did not mean it, but notwithstanding she still persisted that she did love Jesus. In the evening, as my friend was going into her house, this same little girl came running up, and said, "I am afraid I told you a lie this morning; I feel now that I don't love Jesus, but I do want to: will you please tell me what I am to do?" "Go and pray to God to forgive you for Christ's sake, and he will do it." "But," said the little one, "what am I to say? I always repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Belief, but I don't think that will do for me to-night, will you teach me a little prayer?" Accordingly she was told to ask Jesus to wash away all her sins, and give her a new heart. The next morning she met my friend again, and coming up to her, she said, "Oh, I am so happy! I prayed the words you told me, and God has heard me, and now I really do love Jesus." Thus this little lamb was brought to the Saviour through being spoken to in the street.

One night, a little while after this, she went to a prayer-meeting, and when she came out some one told her that her mother was drunk at home, and said she would kill her as soon as she could get hold of her. Of course the poor child was frightened at this, and did not dare go home; but the friend who had first spoken to her went to her father and asked him if he would let his child come home with her. He said, "Take her anywhere out of her mother's way;" so she took her, intending to take care of her till the morning. But the mother, though drunk, wondered why her daughter did not come home, and at last set out to try and find her. Her neighbours by this time had

heard how she had threatened her child, and after she had been to several houses, one of them very foolishly told her where she was. She went to the door in a passion and demanded her child; the poor little thing heard her mother's voice and trembled from head to foot; but she came boldly out, and said, "Kiss me, mother, kiss me." This was almost more than the drunken woman could bear, and she was forced to comply with her request. "You won't beat me, mother, if I come home, will you?" said the child; but the mother would not promise, and well the girl knew what she would receive when she got home. Her kind friend knew too, and so she determined to accompany them home. She did, and stayed some time, and all the while the drunken woman kept on calling her child names; at last she was obliged to leave, and then the mother could do as she liked. She beat the child, and not content with that, made her lie on the floor all night without any covering. And all this persecution was inflicted on the child because she had been to a prayer-meeting.

The last time I saw this little one she asked me to pray for her, and I would ask your readers to do the same. Pray that she may be kept, and that her parents may be converted.

This little incident shows that children, if spoken to in the street, may be brought to Jesus when all other means might fail. For, humanly speaking, if this child had not been spoken to she might never have been saved; but now there is every prospect of her being the means of converting her parents. Before I close, let me give one hint to those who speak to children. Never ask a lot of *minor* questions, but go straight to the point, and tell them of the love of Jesus, and God will bless your efforts.

I am, &c.,

W. L.

PREMATURE JUVENILE LABOUR.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—The life of the late Serjeant Campbell contains a striking illustration of the early age at which the children of the poor begin work, and the long hours during which they labour. It is true that this case occurred some years ago, but it is but a sample of an evil which is too prevalent in our hives of industry.

Serjeant Campbell says, "When I was about five years old, my father went to Scotland and obtained a situation as overseer at the Underwood Cotton Mills, Paisley. When I was about nine, I got a situation as draw-boy; my wages two shillings a week. For the information of those who do not know what a draw-boy means, I will simply explain. Every weaver who wove Paisley shawls was obliged to have a draw-boy to assist him before machines were invented. I had to stand and draw strings from six o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock at night; I had a mile to go to my work, to call my master, so that we might all be at the workshop by six in the morning."

It is sad to know that wicked or idle parents should render the interference of Parliament needful to check these evils; but I am glad to learn that no child under eight years of age will be allowed after this year to engage in regular work. As an old Ragged School teacher, I know too many such cases of premature work, and do not wonder that so many of our scholars

look old when they are mere children. It is time that this crying evil should be stopped by the strong arm of the law, seeing that moral suasion has failed to check it. I doubt not, as results of the new law, that children will remain longer in our day schools, and that they will not attend our night schools so worn out as at present.

Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

Notice of Meeting.

HALESOWEN.

ABOUT six months ago a Committee was formed of gentlemen in the populous borough of Halesowen, on the suggestion of Mr. Jeston Homfray, for the purpose of founding a Free School, that would do something to bring the blessings of secular and religious instruction to the vast numbers of children and adults, who, it was found, were not reached by the educational means in operation. The scheme found favour in the eyes of the public of all denominations, and it was not long in operation before it was found to be as complete a success as its most sanguine promoters anticipated.

A local habitation was found for the school in a building in Birmingham Street, belonging to Mr. Rose, who kindly allowed it rent free. The room is capable of containing something more than 100 children; but at the present it is much overcrowded, the number attending being fully 200. The instruction given has its due proportion of moral and religious training, and everything which touches on any sectarian point is sedulously avoided.

A noticeable feature in connection with the Institution is the baby-room. Everyone must have noticed in this district how common it is to see in the streets very small girls attached to very large babies, under whose weight, with breaking back, they painfully labour hither and thither. Large numbers of this unfortunate class came to the school with the babies; and the latter being felt to be undesirable addenda in the schoolroom, it was determined to transfer them to a separate room, under the care of a person of kindness and experience. The little nurses were thus at once relieved of their untimely burdens, and enabled to learn at the same time the rudiments of education. There are sometimes as many as fifty babies in the room at one time. In the evening there is an Adult School, when men belonging to the working class who have received an education superior to their class give what instruction they can to their fellows; and we are told that this plan has been attended with the very best results. On Sundays there are religious services, which are invariably well attended. These services are conducted both by ministers and laymen, and are as simple as they possibly can be. There can be no doubt that this Institution is a great reformatory centre in Halesowen, and is deserving of the sympathy and support of all classes.

In order to raise funds for its proper maintenance, a tea-meeting on a large scale was projected. Permission to hold it in a field adjoining the Grange was obtained from Mr. F. D. L. Smith. Fully 1,500 tickets were sold; and upwards of 1,400 persons had tea together in the tent. The assembly was largely augmented after tea by fresh comers. There were then about 2,000 present, and among them members of nearly all the leading families of the town and neighbourhood.

Mr. RICHARD TREWOLLA, as Secretary to the Ragged School, instead of a written report, gave the following verbal account of the work. He said that some five or six months ago it was shown from the examination of statistics that in their little town and immediate neighbourhood,

notwithstanding the manifold educational appliances that had been in operation, there were beyond the reach of all these means of education something like 1,000 children. None of these received anything like education properly so called. The propriety of establishing some such Institution as their Ragged School was therefore suggested, so that the poor should have no excuse whatever for not educating their children, and that no child within hearing of their church bells should be without at least the rudiments of education. They therefore started as cheap a thing as they could, and they were now doing their best to do the largest amount of benefit to the labouring class at the very cheapest possible rate. Now their Day School, which was capable of holding from 100 to 120 children, was crowded with nearly 200. They had attached to that a baby-room, of which he dare say some of them had heard some little account; but he would tell them how it came to be brought into operation. After the school had been opened a week or a fortnight, they found in it no fewer than fifty girls nursing infants. It was perfectly clear that they could not have the fifty babies crying in the room at one time; and it was accordingly suggested that they should have a baby-room where the babies could be taken care of while the nurse-girls attended school. So the baby-room was started, and a very excellent old woman was got, who devoted the whole of her time and attention to the babies in the room, where the number present was sometimes 20, 30, 40, and even 50. If they visited the room at any time they would probably find a dozen babies sleeping in it, while another dozen would be crying at the same time; and altogether it was a most decided success. But they had not yet had half the success that was needed; there were still something like 200 or 300 girls walking about their streets nursing little babies. Now, there was no reason why they should not nurse the babies, but that was no reason why they should be kept away from school; and it was this that the Committee of the Ragged School had in view to remedy if they could manage it. With regard to the Night School, they called upon the intelligent of the labouring class to form themselves into a committee and give the best education they possessed to their fellow-labouring men who knew nothing at all in the way of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Nothing could be more successful than that Night School; and he should like to see one such school established wherever there was 1,000 inhabitants, and he believed that the intelligent among the working class who were blessed with some kind of education would come as willingly forward in other places as they did in Halesowen to give some kind of instruction to their less favoured fellows. Then services had been conducted in the schools on Sundays by ministers and laymen, and it was worthy of remark that on this point there had been no quarrelling, no kind of disagreement, because all concerned seemed too earnest and to desire to come forward and solely to declare the great, simple truth of salvation through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. With all this success the Committee were exceedingly well pleased; but they would be more satisfied if at that time next year they should be able to tell that their operations had extended, and had been attended with three or four fold their present success. That great meeting was an evidence of the interest taken by the neighbourhood in the Ragged School; and the greatness of that interest had been shown in other tangible ways. Their efforts had been met most liberally. Ladies and gentlemen from Birmingham had given books to the school, and the excellent Bible Society had given all they asked for in the way of copies of the Scriptures; and he had no doubt that if they made another application they would get what they further needed. A large quantity of books had also been given by ladies of the neighbourhood, as well as some nice pictures for the decoration of the walls of the room.

Papers, Original and Selected.

THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH.

We have often directed the attention of our readers to the services conducted in our Ragged Schools, and which are commonly known by the name of "Ragged Churches." Nor are such services uncalled for; seeing that it is painfully obvious to all attendants at churches and chapels that the artisan class is estranged from the public ordinances of religion. It is not because there is not ample provision made for their accommodation; for above one-third of the space of our various places of worship is vacant every Lord's-day.

It is, then, the well-to-do classes who throng our sanctuaries; whilst the fustian coat and the labourer's jersey are rarely seen in our churches or chapels. In fact, the classes to which we refer are rarely seen in the day-time, save when they meet at the foot of the gallows, to discuss the crime of the culprit, and to toss up whether he will "die game." Thousands of these sleep in the low "lodging-houses for travellers" in the Mint, or the Minories; and hundreds, who are too poor to pay the threepence per night demanded for that accommodation, sleep, curled up like a bundle of rags, on door-steps, or seek for nightly shelter beneath the trees of the public parks.

Usually weak in body and low in temperament, the outward filth too aptly symbolises the moral filth within. Sometimes, however, hunger or disease has not subdued their physical strength, and then they form the staple of our "dangerous classes."

Now, were persons of a social and moral type like this to enter our ordinary places of worship, their *outré* aspect would excite a panic such as no average preacher could control. Yet, having immortal destinies, they must live for ever in heaven or hell; but happily, they can be meetened for the city of God by that One blood which alone can cleanse either prince or beggar.

It is for this class that "Ragged Churches" have been founded. They are mostly conducted in Ragged Schools, the bulk of the preachers being laymen; many of whom, from the power which attends their preaching, evidence that they have received a direct charism from the Holy Ghost for this specific work. So successful has been this movement recently, that in ninety-two Ragged

Churches, no less than 5,838 outcasts or destitute persons—pariahs by birth, or pariahs by sin—are attracted to hear the preaching of the Gospel every Lord's-day. In Field Lane, the "Devil's Acre" of Westminster, the too truly named "Little Hell" of Lisson Grove, and in the miles of wretchedness and crime of the Far East, this experiment to tell the sin-sick and the world-weary that there is Divine love for them, has, through the blessing of the Spirit, been most successful.

But there yet remains an outlying class for whom the Ragged Church—intended as it is for adults—is scarcely adapted: we refer to our scholars. In fact, so much was this felt by the conductors of the largest Ragged Church in London, that the children are now separated from the regular congregation, and attend a special service in another room. It is for this class that separate services are held on Sunday morning in very many Ragged Schools; and such services may properly be regarded as the CHILDREN'S CHURCH.

Among the many reasons for establishing services for children, one of the most prominent is involved in the fact that it is difficult to get a large attendance at our Sunday Morning Schools. Many of their parents, and their name is Legion, are engaged in the markets of the New Cut and Lisson Grove up to past twelve on Saturday nights. Others roll out of pothouses at twelve o'clock, when they are closed by the police; so that they lie in bed until eleven or twelve on Sundays. If, then, their children are old enough to get themselves ready for the Sunday Morning School, they must either attend at a late hour, or go without their breakfast. This supplies a clue to the fact that, whilst 14,000 children attend our Sunday Afternoon Schools, and above 15,000 our evening ones, only 4,000 scholars attend the Sunday Morning Schools. And even of those who do attend, many come at a late hour, whilst others are of a more respectable type than those who attend after midday.

In addition to this, very poor children, ill clad and forlorn as they are, cannot be expected to attend a regular place of worship. It is doubtful, indeed, whether they would be admitted into most churches and chapels did they present themselves. But even if they were allowed to attend, they could not bear the restraints of a regular service, the lengthened routine of which would scarcely be fitted to their understandings. For, as a ragged child once forcibly said, "I *no* understand!"

The question thus recurs, Which is best, to exclude ragged juveniles from public worship altogether, or to establish a service

adapted to their social and spiritual exigencies? Of the latter being the Christ-like conclusion there can be no doubt, seeing that it is but one form of complying with his loving injunction, "Feed my lambs." It is this which led the late Dr. Alexander Fletcher to address large congregations of Sunday scholars, not unfrequently 5,000 in number, on stated occasions. It is this also which, a quarter of a century ago, led the late M. Gaussen, of Geneva, to hold every Sunday a service for children. Numbers of parents delighted to attend, but the devotional exercises and addresses were intended for and adapted to the young. Up to the present hour, also, many of the Sunday Schools in France and Switzerland are merely children's services. An effort, which promises to be successful, is at present being made, mainly owing to the devoted exertions of Mr. A. Woodruff, of Brooklyn, New York, to introduce the British and American system of separate class-teaching. But hitherto the plan pursued has been that of stationing the so-called teachers beside their classes—if classes they deserve to be called—while the pastor delivers an address to the little auditors.

The most systematic provision of worship, with all its accessories, for the young, has existed for many years in Rotterdam. There, two ministers, known to possess the requisite gifts, are set apart for this high calling. As the clergy in that city rotate from church to church in a fixed cycle, each Sunday finds one or other of these pastors officiating in one of the Reformed churches. The place of worship thus used is known for the day by the familiar name of the *Kinder-Kerke* (Children's Church), and thither hie large numbers of boys and girls belonging to all classes of the community.

The services of our Swiss and Dutch friends are of course intended for children of a higher social grade than those who form the staple of Ragged Schools. Happily, what has proved so beneficial to children of the middle class, has been found equally adapted to reach the hearts and consciences of the offspring of our poorer or criminal brethren. Having visited several of these services, we gladly testify how eagerly the little ones attend the Children's Church—or, as they sometimes call it, "our own church"; and how quiet and reverential is their demeanour throughout, when the service is conducted by earnest teachers, our pen can but faintly tell.

For those who have not visited Children's Churches, and as a guide to others who, from this sketch, may be induced to originate them, we give an outline of the forms usually observed :—

1. Hymn.
2. Prayer repeated by children.
3. A portion of Scripture—usually narrative—read by the conductor alone, or by the children verse by verse in turn.
4. Hymn.
5. The Lord's Prayer in unison.
6. The address, sometimes divided into two portions by singing.
7. A lively hymn set to a lively tune.
8. Benediction.

Here it may be intimated that it is found best not to devolve the Children's Church on one person. Hence one teacher usually takes the superintendence, whilst the other conducts singing or prayer. The latter in his turn becomes order-keeper when his friend gives the address. The service rarely exceeds one hour—say from eleven till twelve—as children cannot bear a long mental strain.

After the foregoing remarks, need we say that we should be glad to hear that every Ragged School considered its machinery incomplete without its Children's Church? If, however, there be any doubts on the subject, probably a review of the following results will show their futility:—

1. Many children have been thereby weaned from Sabbath-breaking, and all the evils incident to it.

2. Not a few of the scholars have been so accustomed to the *forms* of public worship, that the Children's Church has become a nursery for the "great congregation" in riper years. Now it must be remembered that, when the *habit* of attending the public ministry of the Word is not developed in childhood, it is not likely to be formed in manhood. It is then something to develop such a habit, even if no immediate spiritual benefit follows.

3. Some souls we know have been gathered into the fold of Jesus through these simple services. Take the following example, not only of personal but of reflex conversion. A youth of sixteen had been converted in a Children's Church. He had left his home in the morning well, but was brought home a disfigured corpse. By the bursting of a steam-boiler, he and another had met with sudden death. Amid poignant sorrow, was there any comfort for the bereaved relatives? Yes; converted two years before, this youth had spoken successively to his mother, sister, brother-in-law, and father, and had—as their subsequent history testified—led them to Jesus. Being instrumental also in the conversion of a young friend, he had, associated with him, begun Christian efforts

among old people, when he was suddenly called away. Now was not this spiritual fruit worth toiling for?

Conversion in youth is the very central idea of a Children's Church, as it is of a Ragged School. It is something to dry up the sources of vice or crime; but if this were all, philanthropy might, if it cared so to do, readily fulfil the social part of our mission. But it is not until we see our scholars, not only "clothed and in their right mind," but "sitting at the feet of Jesus," that we can regard our work as complete. Happily, through the power of the Holy Ghost, we have done both; and hence labours, begun solely for God, have been found equally a work for society. Thus has the Divine promise been verified in the records of every Ragged School, "Those who sow in tears *shall* reap in joy!"

A MORAL MINE EXPLORED.

Do you know the beautiful little town of Llandudno, in North Wales, with its double ocean bay, almost encircled with tier upon tier of mountains, and the majestic promontory of the "Great Orme's Head," with its splendid precipices and ivy-clad rocks? In the summer of 1863, I was rambling with a friend amongst the beautiful scenery with which that neighbourhood abounds, when we came upon a large copper-mine, and close to it observed some very pretty specimens of ore lying about. They were of different sizes and colours; all more or less valuable according to the amount of metal they contained. I made a little collection of my newly-found treasures, and returned home delighted with the possession of them. Close to this mine the prospect was truly lovely, presenting a rare combination of beauty. Grey cliffs and romantic rocks, craggy steeps washed by the foaming waves, sequestered caverns, wood-crowned heights, skirted by picturesque undulating outlines of the mountains, and the cloud-capped summits of Snowdon.

The contemplation of such a picture was a rich enjoyment, but my thoughts took a still wider range as they wandered to *another* mine, *other* precious ore, *other* miners than those of Maes-y-Facrell, a mine of moral darkness, degradation, and misery, out of which, however, is dug much precious metal, not indeed to be converted into the coin that perishes, but into those riches which will endure unto life everlasting. The mine of which I now speak, though surrounded, it may be, by outward scenes of beauty and brightness, contains the very elements of want, misery, and even crime—young hearts crushed and well nigh broken by ill usage, or steeled by temptation to run into actual peril—frames crippled and disabled, shut out from all the enjoyments of active life, physically prevented from habits of independent self-support. The miners who are employed in *this* labour are a set of earnest, devoted Christian men and women, who do not shrink at the difficulties before them, nor at the dark discouragements they often meet with, because they are

armed with the lamp of eternal truth, and rest on the power of Him who is The Light.

If any of my readers will dive down into the homes and haunts of the lowest of our poor population, they will soon come upon *this* mine. I wil tell you of some of the rich specimens of ore that have been dug out through the labours of the Committee of the CRIPPLES' HOME. This valuable institution is another offshoot of our movement, springing as it did out of Hill Street Ragged School. The first received was a crippled beggar earning 3s. 6d. a day by her idle trade; she was a very deceitful, wicked child, but she was found and placed in an asylum of safety which had hitherto been only a refuge for a few homeless girls, and the question came, "What was to become of HER?" The answer was quickly suggested, "Why, search and find out more cripples, teach them a trade, and put them in the way of gaining their own livelihood." Well, the miners set to work, down the shaft they went, more cripples were soon found, and a matron was engaged to teach them straw-bonnet, hat, and basket making. Classes were formed, and a number of ladies most kindly proffered their services to give them daily instruction in the common rudiments of education, and especially in scriptural knowledge.

What began in so small a way soon increased, and produced such a result, that, at the present time, the Committee have the pleasure of pointing out a shop, 33, Baker Street, at the corner of Dorset Street, where six of their young charges are established in a bonnet trade connected with the Home, also to a stall at the Soho Bazaar, for the sale of their work, and held by one of the cripples, and to a large manufactory in the Institution itself, to all of which places the public are especially invited, in the assurance they will be pleased at the display of useful and ornamental articles they will find at each and all of them; indeed, I would strongly advise anyone who may not have previously visited the Cripples' Home, to go there and judge for themselves of its great utility, and also of the very happy appearance of the inmates.

There are, besides, several girls (who have been brought up at the Home and made proficient in their trade), established in houses of business in the City and at the West End, endeavouring honestly and respectably to maintain themselves. The original object of the institution has not been lost sight of—that of affording an asylum to young persons whose position is at least perilous, and to those who may have drunken and immoral parents. Here they are received and trained for domestic service, especially as laundry-maids, and for this latter purpose, a "public laundry" is attached to the Home, in order that the Refuge Girls may be perfected in that very needful part of a servant's training. Being strong and active themselves, they are able to be of essential use to the poor cripples, by waiting on them, ministering to their comfort, and wheeling their perambulators in the hour of exercise, which is daily spent in the Regent's Park or elsewhere. Besides, too, these kindnesses draw out the finer and more sympathising sensibilities of their nature, and teach them the valuable lesson of "bearing one another's burdens."

The cripples are, generally speaking, very delicate, but the good food, &c., with which they are supplied, added to the devoted attention and care

bestowed upon them by the medical friends attached to the Home, usually produce a marked improvement in their strength and health in a very short time.

Every summer they are sent, under charge of one or more matrons, to the seaside for a few weeks, and those who know how to appreciate such an enjoyment, can well imagine the delight this is to the poor delicate cripples, and the great benefit it is to their health and strength.

The few who have died have for the most part given full evidence of love to that Saviour who had become savingly known to them whilst there. A touching scene took place by the sick bed of one of them. She and another girl had both been crippled beggars, pursuing their vagrant trade in the same neighbourhood, and E. C. came up to poor, fading H. G., and asked her to forgive her for having formerly "poached upon her ground"; the desired pardon being readily granted, the dying girl had her little brothers and sisters assembled, and admonished them all, as feeling they were in peculiar need, being orphans. She then put her arms round the matron's neck, and thanked God she had ever been brought to the Home, where she had first learned to love Jesus.

Several of the Refuge girls have emigrated to Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, and some have married very respectably.

It may be supposed that to work such a mine as *this* requires large funds to meet all the expenses, but it is surely *worth* working, when so much ore is to be dug out. Who will refuse to help? The miners need to feel that the public practically sympathise with them in their labours, and the smallest expression of that sympathy will be gratefully received, whether it be evinced by actual co-operation with them, or by increasing their funds, or above all, by remembrance of the institution at the footstool of grace, in earnest supplication that He whose are the "true riches," will increasingly manifest his power to bless it, and that through the atoning blood of Jesus, it may be said of all these precious young hearts, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

MADAGASCAR—MOTHERS' MEETING.

Mrs. Pool, of Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, who recently commenced a Mothers' Meeting for Madagascar women and girls, says—"I have had them already four times. They come to my house, and I have quite as many as I can attend to; they learn so quickly, and are so pleased to come. I wish I could send you a photograph of them as they squat on the matting, looking at me with such loving interest and working so quietly. Half-past two o'clock is our time of meeting, but they are often here before one. They sit under the verandah, and wait till I am ready. I have written home for some toys, that I may have something to give them. Nearly all the children around us are naked, the babies invariably so. A garment seems to civilize them, and they only wear one at a time. Last week some of my women had business, so they sent me word that they could not come early. They were in their place, however, for

the reading of the Scriptures and the singing; their love and devotion brought the tears to my eyes. Thirty were present, and my room was quite full; and, as many of them require teaching to work, I found ample scope for all my energies. They brought their Testaments, and we read a chapter together; and then I taught them to sing some English tunes to hymns in their own language: this pleased them very much, they seemed unwilling to say *veloma* (good-bye). I was very tired; but they were as fresh and lively as when they first came in, although the afternoon was intensely hot.

"Perhaps you do not know that boys and girls marry while quite children here. Some of my women are not more than twelve or thirteen years old, but they are wives and mothers, knowing little and perhaps caring less for their duties and responsibilities. Yet I think you would love them very much; they are so grateful, and their manner so kind. They come with their small offerings, a few eggs or lemons, or a basket of onions. The little girls bring me pretty bunches of roses, which are very fragile, and do not last long in water, but they are deliciously sweet. The other morning a boy quite naked brought me some roses; I was so sorry I had nothing I could spare him for a *caniba;* I could love anyone who brings me roses, they are so home-like.

"Both men and women are delighted with my sewing-machine. The other day I had an assembly of nineteen watching me use it; they seemed as if they could not believe their eyes. We have so many visitors that many days we have not time to take our meals, and get our food as we can."

BRANDS PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.

Those who know what is the "worst of London," says the *Christian World*, will tell us that it is where these wretched neighbourhoods are to be found—say in the Nichol Streets and Friars Mounts of Bethnal Green, and in the courts and alleys of Spitalfields; about Fashion Street; and that worst den of all, Little Kate Street, known to its inhabitants by the name of a lodging-house which is called "*the* Kate," as though it deserved some especial distinction of infamy. There is, or was, little chance of the casual wayfarer straying down that place; for it was marked with a signal to show that a moral pest raged there, and passengers who might unwittingly have entered its precincts were warned off by friendly constables placed on duty for the purpose. Whoever desires to see what is possible in this age of civilisation, where agricultural gangs are treated worse than plantation negroes, and the secretaries of great trades unions hire men to commit murder at £15 a head, should go (if they dare) to the Kate, and spend an evening in its most illustrative ginshop. Is it any wonder that little criminals "whose heads scarcely reach to the top of the dock" should be such frequent prisoners at our police-courts. Need anyone be surprised to see the number of poor, ragged, miserable children about the streets in the city and eastward—children who, under the pretence of selling half-faded flowers or cigar-lights, hover about the skirts of respectability, and try to pilfer something from its

abundance to appease the gnawing hunger which has never been fully satisfied? These wretched children, with their old, artful faces, and their obscene words and cries as they scud away from the coming policeman, are amongst the terrible sights of London, and they come from about that very district of which we have just been speaking. What can be the probable future of the boys? Still more dreadful question—What is the inevitable future of the girls who come out of the courts and alleys, and show themselves in our streets, to our reproach, if not to our shame?

Thank God something has been done for the boys. There are Ragged Schools, Refuges, Homes, and now a big ship upon the river, where these poor, neglected, destitute lads, who for good or evil are to help make the future of England, are some of them provided for. Some of them, but alas! not half of them, not a third, scarcely a tithe; while the girls—well, we are only speaking of children, be it remembered, mere infants, some of them who, had they been the pets of fathers and mothers like ourselves, would scarcely have been expected to know right from wrong—the girls are growing daily into women, and swiftly and surely must we reap the evil harvest of neglect and indifference if more be not done for them. Something has been done.

Close to that neighbourhood of which we have said so much, one building stands out from its sordid surroundings a striking example of what might be, if only the great London public could be made to see its deep necessity. Who has not seen that drop of water in the gas microscope—that one single drop of water of which one rapid glimpse makes us recoil in horror, and go home to order a filter? Were it possible to flash upon the mental sight of the public one glance of what one girl-child's life is, and will be, amongst the poor and depraved in Spitalfields and Whitechapel, we should all cry out to build a dozen more moral filters like the Girls' Refuge in Albert Street, and should take a more lively personal influence in a work intended to save our country from pestilence. Alas! this sight has been given but to a few; so that the one building amidst all that teeming population is not yet full of inmates. Its wide and lofty dormitories might easily be extended, and room made for more neat little beds; its great schoolroom with the high timber-arched roof would hold more scholars, though it is pretty full of those who cannot be admitted to the house for want of funds; its ample kitchen fire would roast more meat, and boil more big kettles of soup to fill the little hungry mouths; and its vast laundry, with its steam-pipes and vats for washing, boiling, and rinsing, would help to train more girls into efficient servants and redeem them, so that they might forget all that was behind of their miserable infant life, so precocious in the midst of all evil influences, and reach forward to a future of happiness and usefulness.

Twenty years ago this labour of love was begun by some ardent and yet patient gentlemen associated with Mr. H. R. Williams, the present honorary secretary, and a constant worker, as well as giver, in this and similar institutions. An old and unsavoury stable was the first building that could be procured, and, after such sanitary improvements as could be effected were completed, that stable (not unsuggestive of a certain manger "wherein the infant lay") was opened as a Ragged School. There is no need to tell how the school grew into an influence; how by degrees funds were accumulated

and the first stone of the King Edward Ragged and Industrial Schools and Eastern Refuge in Albert Street, Brick Lane, was laid; how on the site of the stable a Ragged Church arose, where a congregation, less ragged, perhaps, than the first attendants, now go on Sunday evenings to hear something of God's love for them, having become not the less ready to believe it inasmuch as they have learned a little of the love of their fellow-men.

Let those who would see what may be done for the "worst of London" pay a visit to the Refuge itself, note the two score girls from six to fourteen years old, many of whom seem, by their ruddy cheeks and lightened eyes, and, above all, by the indescribable change of expression which has somehow come into their faces, to have been called to newness of life. Let them walk hither and thither about the large schoolroom, where the teachers are at work amidst a hundred young souls all eager for instruction, and pay a visit to the airy yard, where about thirty little chubby "tots," more or less in want of apparel, are assembled in an "infant Ragged School." The journey will be worth something: it will expand the heart, bring a well of living water to the eyes which will purge them of such selfish films as too soon gather on our sight in the round of daily personal cares.

In Memoriam.

ROBERT ANNAN, OF DUNDEE.

We have often referred in these pages to the singular characters God has raised up to evangelise the outcasts of our great cities. From the collier, Richard Weaver, to William Carter, the sweep, the Holy Spirit has manifestly gifted many poor men in these last days, with ability to preach the gospel of the grace of God with wondrous power. And why? Surely in a day when too many Christians hunger after eloquence or learning, that it may be seen that true conversion stands not in the words or the "wisdom of man."

Prominent among these earnest workers was the late Robert Annan, of Dundee. The most remarkable event in his life was the change effected upon his soul during the revival services in Dundee in 1860. Previous to these meetings he was a lawless, fierce, and unmanageable nature, intensified by the vice of intemperance, to which he was addicted. At last he went to the United States of America, in hope of being able to turn over a new leaf in a new land. In this he was disappointed. On one occasion he narrowly escaped death. He was found lying drunk across a railway, and the moment he was lifted from the rails an engine passed the spot. He then went over to Canada and enlisted in a Highland regiment. He had not been long a

soldier when he deserted. He entered the Royal Navy, but had not been long aboard a man-of-war when he deserted that service too. He afterwards gave himself up and was punished. His relatives then bought him off and he returned to Dundee.

He was induced to attend the revival meetings carried on in the Barrack Park and Kinnaird Hall. The arrows of conviction penetrated deep into his soul, filling him with such terror, that at one o'clock in the morning he repaired to the house of the Rev. John M'Pherson, of Hilltown Free Church, to ask the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Mr. M'Pherson at first thought, from the man's desperate looks, as well as from his previous knowledge of his character, that he was come to do him some personal injury. But soon he saw that the iron frame before him quivered, that the strong man was bowed to the dust under the terror of the wrath of God. For three days Robert Annan continued in this state, unable either to eat or drink. "No man," he himself afterwards said, "could have the faintest idea of the tortures which my guilty soul endured during that terrible time of darkness and despair." "I went to see him," says Mr. M'Pherson in his striking narrative, "and found him on his knees crying in a piteous voice to heaven for mercy. 'I am a lost sinner,' he would say again and again; 'I am a sinner deserving hell, but is there not salvation for even such as me?' A ray of hope seemed just then to be dawning upon his soul. I touched him on the shoulder, and when he turned round I said to him, 'Robert, are you not looking for a sign from heaven? Ought you not to rest on the Word of God, which says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out"?'" Some time after he went back to inform the minister that the light had broken forth, and the lion became a lamb—the slave of sin the devoted servant of the Lord.

Immediately he sought to devote his talents to his new Master's cause. "I wish," he said to the minister, "to do something for Christ; give me some tracts." On receiving some, he proceeded to the door of Bell Street Hall, where a sceptic was lecturing, and offered a tract to every entrant. This was his first work, and from that hour he never ceased to labour for the salvation of sinners. "Naturally warm of temperament and resolute of will—impulsive, vehement, and impetuous—on his conversion all this force of character was consecrated to the service of God, and in this service he seemed never to weary or falter." Especially did he pity and care for those whom no man cared for. "I know not how it is," he said, "but I feel a constant hunger and thirst for saving poor drunkards and harlots." He preferred accordingly addressing meetings in the open air, in places where he was likeliest to meet the class he wanted. The coldest nights in winter found him, Bible in hand, addressing in a loud and terrible voice the poor creatures that gathered round him. His intense earnestness and manly style riveted their attention, and many tears have been shed by young and old around the places where Robert Annan stood.

Growing rapidly in grace, he gave himself to the roughest part of the missionary work connected with Hilltown Church. "He had strong faith, and never seemed to despair for the recovery of the worst. His courage was never daunted. He would stand calm and unmoved amidst the crowds,

exposed to all manner of insult and abuse. He did not weary in well-doing, though his efforts for the good of others were in a great degree self-denying. Instead of resting after his day's toil he would go away out to the exhausting but delightful work of seeking to save the lost. Almost every night, and several times every Sunday, he would go to speak or pray somewhere. Often in winter did he stand with the snow to his knees, and with streaming eyes plead with men to turn to the Lord and live. Whilst thus employed he did not neglect other duties. He was a faithful servant, an obliging neighbour, and he cared for his family's welfare. Sometimes he spoke with tears about his little children. In his house he might be found with his Bible on one knee and his babe on the other, helping his wife. When wearied beyond measure he would lie down with the cradle-string in his hand, resting himself whilst he rocked the child.

Among the fishermen on the coast of Aberdeen and Kincardine shires, among the railway navvies at Banchory, among the roughs and harlots of Dundee, and in the encampments of the gipsies, Robert Annan laboured until the end. "God is able," he said, on the Sabbath evening before his death, when some friends said to him it was of no use going to these last, "God is able to save all the gipsies." On the very day before his death, he found means of sending to a Christian retreat a poor girl who had strayed from virtue, and whom he found wandering about the docks with the thought of drowning herself. His instinctive sympathy for suffering of every kind led to his heroic efforts to rescue lives in danger of drowning. "Can I stand aside," he said, "and see a fellow creature perish, while I have the power to save them?" And his consuming zeal for souls was never more strikingly manifest than, when swimming with a boy he had saved, at the very same spot where he was afterwards drowned, he appealed to the little fellow to "Look to Christ." "Take a hold of Christ, he will save you, he will save you."

The morning before his death he retired after breakfast for secret prayer; and, on leaving the house, he took a piece of chalk and wrote the word ETERNITY on the pavement at the door. Two hours afterwards he was *there!* His last act on earth was to save the life of a little boy. At least five other lives he had saved from drowning within a single year, but the sixth cost him his own. He died the death of a hero.

Dying like the true Christian hero he was, Robert Annan had the funeral of a hero, for the great bell of the Old Steeple of Dundee was heard tolling slowly as a long procession wound its way through a mass of saddened spectators to the resting-place of the dead. The chief magistrate of the city ordered this honour to the memory of the deceased; he himself, with many other distinguished citizens, walking in the procession; and groups, both of ladies and working women, dressed in mourning, were among the multitude of lookers-on.

OLD CLOTHES FOR RAGGED SCHOOLS.

In extracting the following appeal for old clothes, which appeared in "The Revival" for October 31st, we need scarcely say anything to confirm the statements of the writer. Never did poverty more prevail in the byeways of London, and never was there a greater cry for temporal aid. We are already inundated with applications for old clothes, especially from those eastern districts where poverty is chronic; but unless Christian kindness responds at once to the cry of our poorer brethren, their petitions will be in vain. For, we regret to say, that with requests for old clothes above the average, we have fewer cast-off garments to give than ever. We hope, then, that this appeal will meet with a ready response from those who not only admire the character of Dorcas, but would wish to tread in her Christ-like footsteps. "What thou doest, do quickly."

"Though I am grieved to confirm the pressing need, I am pleased to find you making another appeal for old clothes. The number now out of work, to say nothing of the sudden outburst of winter, renders it desirable that our poorer brethren—not a few of them brothers and sisters in Jesus—should be prepared for its rigours by an ample supply of clothing. Last October you kindly inserted in 'The Revival' an appeal for the schools connected with the Ragged School Union. To this appeal, I am thankful to say, many of your readers (all of them anonymous) responded by sending parcels of old clothing to No. 1, Exeter Hall. By these means many of my poor clients, as well adults as children, were well clad, and that at a season when warm clothing is almost a necessary of life. In the schools connected with the Ragged School Union there are now 42,000 scholars on the books, together with above 6,000 adults, giving a united population of 48,000. This is an increase in one year of above 4,000 souls, all brought daily under Gospel teaching; and, what is as valuable, Gospel influences. One fact will show how much this sudden outburst of winter has affected our poorer brethren, namely, the recent large influx into our Ragged Churches. Thus, on September 29, there were present at Field Lane Ragged Church 703 persons; but on October 6, no less than 1,010 were present, about 700 of these being men.

"I do trust, then, that some of your readers, who have no greater local claim, will think of the poor little ones of this great city, and so ransack their wardrobes, and send their contents to 1, Exeter Hall."

The Teachers' Column.

THE ART OF READING.

A MEETING of the paid teachers of the London Ragged Schools was held in Field Lane School on Wednesday, November 13th. After tea Mr. R. Mourstephen took the chair. Mr. Curtis read a paper on "The Art of Reading: the means for its speedy acquirement, and suggestions for its right employment," from which we make the following

extracts. He said that as no workman can work without tools, so it is highly requisite that you should be furnished with suitable school material. And for reading purposes you require sheet lessons, books, and black boards. The sheet lessons and books should be a regularly-graduated series. The sheet lessons should be mounted or contained in a frame. I am of opinion that a wooden frame similar to that lying on the table is best adapted for the purpose, as the sheets can be easily changed and are not likely to be torn at the edges, as is the case with the iron frames, and they can be had at a very small cost. This matter of school material is a very serious affair; and the most anxious care should be given to its preservation, not only as a matter of conscientiousness on your part, but for the school's sake, as committees sometimes, through deficient funds, are slow in replacing it. Moreover, the care of your school material is a part of the moral training of your children. Tattered sheets and mutilated books are very unsightly, and militate against that neatness and order which it is your business to enforce.

Another matter of importance is the proper division of your time. To this end you require a well-arranged time-table. This should be written out in due form and hung up in a convenient situation, that it may be readily consulted. In the arrangement of subjects, it would be as well to vary the time. Thus, if you began with reading on Monday, you might commence with writing on Tuesday and arithmetic on Wednesday, so as to meet the requirements of those who are late either through occupation or indifference.

With regard to the teaching arrangements, care should be taken first of all, by a strict examination, to ascertain the attainments of each child, in order that they be properly classified; and a due separation should be made of those children who are too young to acquire letters.

Where the numbers are large, or if not very large, as the bulk of the children are very ignorant, I think it advisable not to employ the whole school in one operation. Reading, writing, and arithmetic might be carried on simultaneously. Such a practice supposes the preparation of black boards for arithmetic and writing while the children are collecting. To set individual copies, besides being a sheer waste of time, is incompatible with this suggestion. With such a division of studies, more supervision can be given to the reading. Thus I have thought that in teaching the alphabet you might proceed at the rate of two letters a-week, which will carry you over the six-and-twenty letters in a quarter of a year. Take the small alphabet. Say that **a** is is taught on Monday; **b**, on Tuesday; **c**, on Wednesday; **d**, on Thursday. On each day a repetition is to take place of what is taught in the preceding days. On Friday the children should be examined in what they have learned. On the following Monday the class is taught to combine two letters, as **a-c**, ac; on Wednesday, **a-d**, ad; on Thursday, **b-a-d**, bad; on Friday, **c-a-b**, cab. On each day, as with the letters, repetition is to be made; and, to vary the lesson, instead of using the sheet, the letters might be printed on the black board with chalk. On the third week four more letters (**e**, **f**, **g**, **h**) might be taught, continuing daily the repetition of the previous letters; and examination by dodging on the fourth week. Combination of the eight letters will now take place at the rate of two words—easy and familiar—of three letters per day: such words as bag, bed, cab, had, fed. Advantage might be taken of euphony to impress the sound, thus, hag, mag, rag; for children like jingle. In the second quarter I would have you return and go over the same ground, much in the same way. In the third quarter introduce the capital letters; and to aid you in this purpose, there is a sheet in very bold type, giving easy syllables and then words.

I am a great advocate of sheet lessons for the earlier classes. You can better

manage a collective lesson in reading, and have more certainty of the eye going with the tongue. The children should be well grounded in monosyllables before compound words are attempted. If you can obtain books and sheets of the same lessons, so much the better, as they can be interchanged, producing variety, and the sheets will prepare the way for the book.

Supposing the children massed together as previously suggested. The first sentence for reading being, "The house is very large," the master or monitor points to the word "The," and pronounces it; the children all together spell and pronounce it. The word is repeated so long as the pointer is held to the word. The next step will be individual. Each child spells a word: if any one is unable to do it, some other child does, and repetition is made by the one who failed. The next step is to read all together, very slowly; afterwards each child reads a word; and lastly, each child reads the whole sentence. Examinations should be made, and the more backward should have additional exercise in the lesson. Words found to be difficult of pronunciation should be written on the black board and frequently spelt. A spelling lesson by means of the black board might frequently be given. The children might be requested to name and spell things used at home, such as what we eat, what we wear, what we see —words of three, four, or five letters. The words should be printed on the black board and afterwards read. At times the words should be spelled by the teacher, the children pronouncing them.

It is important that something definite should be attempted. If any of your children continue ignorant of their letters, and exhibit no sign of progress after some years of connection with the school, the register of daily attendance, duly kept, would possibly explain the reason why.

The business of a teacher is the noblest on earth: the great work of unfolding, drawing out, and training the powers of the human soul. You have to cultivate the attention, observation, and reflection of your children; to train them to habits of order, truthfulness, and honesty; to enlighten their consciences by a few words in season in connection with such incidents as your school daily furnishes; and also to direct their faith and love to their Heavenly Father and their Saviour.

Society demands that your work should be manifest; and depend upon it that the time is not far distant when a rigid inquiry will be instituted into what every class of educators have done and are doing. Let it, then, be seen that the work of the Ragged School teacher exhibits thoughtfulness, conscientiousness, and piety. Thus you have tamed the wild, refined the gross, awakened love to God and man, and have given into the hands of your children the keys of knowledge by turning them out adepts in those essential elements of secular knowledge—reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The subject was discussed with great interest, and many valuable suggestions were offered by several masters. Messrs. Gent and Hytche, of the Ragged School Union, and Messrs. Stiff, Harrison, Dowson, Hardy, Radford, Dowling, and Harsey took part in this interesting conference.

The Children's Gallery.

THE LITTLE BALLAD-SINGER.

It was the last night of the year—a dull, dark, dreary night—the snow was falling drearily; no moon was visible, no bright stars shot out from amongst the fast-scudding clouds, and people were hurrying through the streets, hastening to some merry gathering to usher in the

New Year, or perhaps to the quietude and comfort of their own bright firesides. All but one poor solitary child, who wandered alone in her scanty clothing, with bare head and naked feet, dragging the tattered shawl more closely around her shivering form, and plaintively, with sweet but tremulous voice, singing one of her oft-sung ballads, in hopes of gaining a few halfpence to purchase her scanty supper.

Perhaps she hoped the hearts of men might be fuller of generous impulse on this New Year's-eve; but if so, the coming storm had chilled them back to selfishness; for little heed was taken of her. No lingering crowd gathered as usual to listen to her song, and the feeble voice warbled its last stanza in a deserted square. All day she roamed the streets, chanting her stock of ballads, but never earned a penny. Cold, destitute, and hungry, she crept along until she came to a large house looking grander than its neighbours. Merry laughter sounded, telling of a bright, genial scene within. She thought surely there was plenty here—she might venture to ask an alms; so, stepping softly up, she tapped at the glass door, from which she could view all the brightness of luxury and wealth. She saw the hall decked with evergreens and lamps; servants bustling from room to room; and at that moment the lady of the house descending the spacious staircase, ready to receive her guests.

Poor little Jeannie's eyes glistened when she beheld the gorgeous velvet dress, with its sweeping train, and all the glitter of precious jewellery; and she thought that one so rich must surely be good and ready to help, so ventured to give a second tap, whereon the lady started, uttered a little shriek, and ordered the footman to send away "that little horrid beggar girl."

"Only a penny, my lady—only a penny!" pleaded Jeannie. "I have had no food all day; am cold and faint. Only a penny!" But the indignant lady drew her robe aside, lest any contamination might fall from closer contact. And Jeannie, not waiting to be thrust away, turned with brimming eyes, and hastily descended the steps.

Carriages now came dashing up, and she held out her hand as each gaily-attired visitor descended; but all turned aside disdainfully or heedlessly from her, and entered the house of gaiety and pleasure. Wearied and wretched, she sat down on the end of the lowest step, and leaned her aching head against the ornamental pillar of the portico. Soon the exhausted limbs relaxed, the heavy eyelids drooped, then closed in sleep.

The snow continued to fall heavily; many carriages came and went; the sound of music, dancing, and laughter burst from the merry-making party; but Jeannie never stirred. Hour after hour passed, and then the deep strokes of midnight chimed, and the loud peal of many bells burst suddenly through the heavy air, proclaiming the death of the old year—the life of the new. Death and life! Ay, such it was with little Jeannie, who slept so calmly in her shroud of snow. She, too, had heard the sound of chariots—of angels' rejoicing voices. And the bells that rang such a merry peal on earth for the newborn year, had echoed through the vaults of heaven, proclaiming the birth of a life to immortality!

Jeannie was found by the early watch, frozen and dead. None claimed the poor, friendless child; so they laid her in a pauper's grave. The doctor said she had died from cold and want—died when a penny might have saved her for *that* night, or the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yet none laid it on their conscience; not even the wealthy lady, within whose spacious house had met that gay and brilliant assemblage, whilst the poor neglected ballad-singer lay dying outside. It was a startling contrast, from which a lesson may be learned. The world rang with congratulations for a happy New Year, as she, happier than they, sang her first jubilee song in heaven.

My dear little friends, in the midst of your Christmas rejoicings—in the plenty

and comfort the New Year continues to *you*, whilst seated in the glow of your bright fireside, surrounded by loving friends—forget not the houseless poor; grudge not the penny to the sad-hearted, desolate wanderer; remember "It is more blessed to give than to receive."—*Children's Hour.*

The Poet's Corner.

"WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

WHAT of the night? 'Tis dark and chill;
No sound invades the silence deep;
The mists lie cold on vale and hill,
And we our weary vigils keep.

We stand upon our lonely towers;
Earth, wrapped in slumber, lies beneath;
How slowly pass the anxious hours
That lengthen out her night of death!

What of the night? O Lord, how long
That we must watch and wait in vain?
Till sighing hearts break forth in song,
And earth her long-lost smiles regain?

What of the night? The morn is nigh!
Lo! the first streaks of twilight grey
Shoot upward in the eastern sky,
And kindle into endless day.

Past is the night! its sighs and tears,
Its vigils and its griefs are o'er;
The dawn of righteousness appears,
The Sun is risen, to set no more.

W. H. GROSER.

Correspondence.

"OUR CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE"—A FREE CIRCULATION FUND.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—It pleased me exceedingly to find, from a leader in last month's Magazine, that there is sold of "Our Children's Magazine" no less than 84,000 numbers yearly; yet, at the same time, it strikes me that as there are at least 30,000 scholars in London, and perhaps 100,000 more in the provinces, this number ought to be sold monthly, especially as other purchasers

than those connected with Ragged Schools patronise this useful, amusing, and instructive little publication. But perhaps, after all, it is not surprising that the sale is not what it ought to be, seeing that many of the schools, like the scholars, are too poor to purchase the magazine. To overcome this difficulty, do you not think, Sir, that a special fund might be founded?

Children and young people by nature like excitement; and if we cannot give those of them who can read healthy, lively, well-written, and nicely illustrated literature, they will take to that which is pernicious. But if we supply this want, the still small voice of "Our Children's Magazine," which occasionally drops pearls from the sacred volume, may come in the quiet hour like the voice of the Lord "in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day," and leave an impression which will never be effaced. For the Lord's ways of touching the heart and awakening the conscience are manifold, and the means of conversion as marvellous as are the works of his hand.

That the reading of the "Satanic literature" of the day is baneful in its effect none will gainsay; nor can it be avowed that healthy literature has little power when we remember that the Reformation was mainly effected by reading the Book of books, and reading it, too, under difficulties. After this, perhaps, I cannot do better than close with an illustration of the effects of reading impure literature, as shown in the life of Joseph Henry G——. He was born in 1830. About 1844 he began to read what, at that time, was termed "Lloyd's penny trash," which took such a hold on his imagination that he wanted to be, like one of its heroes, a "mysterious character," and did some very unaccountable things. But "Varney the Vampire" seems to have fixed the mind of Joseph Henry on him who "was a murderer from the beginning"; for about that time he began to send poison in letters. For this dastardly practice he received a twelvemonth's hard labour. Again at liberty, he repeated the act, attempting to poison one or two persons who had offended him, and tried to stab a young schoolgirl of fourteen who had slighted him. For the latter act he was again incarcerated for the same term, and twice publicly whipped. Once more free, but still uncured, he repeated the offences; and so, before he was seventeen, he had been twice imprisoned, twice whipped, and was now transported for seven years, besides having been taken from a business which he was learning, his prospects blighted, and his parents ruined by their efforts to obtain counsel to defend him at his trial. Thus had the art of reading, which to so many youths has been their greatest temporal blessing, been turned into a curse. Need you wonder, then, Sir, with so fearful an example before me, that I am so desirous that, if we give to the children of the poor the art of reading, we should at the same time find them healthy literature to read.

I am, &c.,

JACOB FÖRST.

[We are obliged to our correspondent for his suggestion for establishing a fund for the free circulation of "Our Children's Magazine." Many publishers of serials have adopted this course, and in the cases of the "British Messenger" and "Band of Hope Review" with great success. Nor can we doubt that a fund for the free circulation of our little Magazine would prove a great boon to many poor Ragged Schools in town and country.—ED.]

Notices of Meetings.

CARR STREET.

At the usual quarterly meeting, the committee and teachers of the Carr Street Ragged School testified to the esteem and regard which they entertain for our old friend, Mr. J. B. Day, by presenting him with a very handsome silver-plated tea and coffee service of six pieces. It was stated that he was one of the principal agents in the establishment of this school, some seventeen years ago. He has devoted some of the best energies of his life to promote its prosperity, giving up every Sunday evening during the whole of that long period in the steady discharge of the duties of superintendent, and has won the respect and regard of all who have worked with him.

The testimonial bore the following inscription:—"Presented to Mr. J. B. Day by the committee and teachers of Carr Street Ragged School, Limehouse Fields, in token of their appreciation of his services as superintendent for upwards of seventeen years. October 16, 1867."

Mr. Day warmly responded to this token of affection on the part of his fellow-workers for Christ. After reviewing his past seventeen years' labour at Carr-street, he expressed his belief that this winter session will, through the Divine blessing, be more fruitful than ever in spiritual results.

WAKEFIELD.

Recently the first annual meeting in connection with the Wakefield Ragged School took place. W. H. Leatham, Esq., M.P., presided.

The Chairman said:—I must enlist your sympathies for a class which, perhaps, of all classes has the fewest friends and the greatest number of enemies. I don't speak of the children in this town, but the class from which Ragged Schools are generally supplied. You are aware that in this country there is something like six millions a-year spent upon the pauperism of the country, and there are about 900,000 recipients. But the funds for the support of the pauperism of the country do not supply the wants of these poor children. They don't live in the workhouses, they live in the streets. These poor children are, in fact, looked upon with suspicion by many persons. They are watched, as a matter of course, by the police; and if they cannot get into useful employment, they sometimes beg, and they sometimes steal. Now, that is the class from which, as you will expect, are gathered the children who attend the Ragged Schools; and in spite of our advanced civilisation, in spite of the high position at which we have arrived in this country, there is no other means that I know of but Ragged Schools that have reached this particular class. Now these poor children are influenced, more than by anything else, by kindness. It is a thing they seldom meet with at their own homes—it is a thing they seldom meet with among themselves; for such is the desperate struggle for existence, and so scanty are the means of maintenance, that they frequently quarrel over the things they obtain, whether they get them legally or illegally. Now this being their position, the mode of kindness adopted in Ragged Schools has a great effect upon them; and what is more than that, when they are instructed in the blessed truths of the Gospel, the Gospel reaches them—the Bible reaches them—and their consciences are touched. Those blessed words of the Saviour to a fallen world reach them with wonderful efficacy and power, and hence we obtain a control over them when no one else has any.

That has been the experience of those who have conducted Ragged Schools. Now, by this school at Wakefield we are trying to educate and raise this class of children to a different position; for when they are made acquainted with elementary knowledge, they will be able to earn an honest livelihood. You are well aware that Ragged Schools have long been established in the large cities and towns of England, and have long been associated with the name of one celebrated nobleman—Lord Shaftesbury. (Cheers.) It was only the other day, however, that I was reading of Lord Haddo, who was afterwards the Earl of Aberdeen. I found that he laboured in precisely the same sphere as Lord Shaftesbury; and, therefore, we have the example of some in high position in this country, and so we have less excuse if we do not do the best we can for these poor forlorn creatures. In Wakefield, in the year 1849, a Ragged School was established under the presidency of the Rev. James Taylor. It was conducted with a great deal of pains, and it lasted about eight years, being held for that time in different places, until at last it was given up in consequence of a deficiency of aid. Mr. Cooke has now, however, taken it up again, and he is assisted by many of the ladies and gentlemen who were connected with that Ragged School which was given up in 1857. Mr. Cooke, however, has gone further than he did, I believe. He gives food, and occasionally clothing, in a very generous way, and therefore he supplies all the necessities almost of mind and body. (Cheers.) He has struggled with great difficulties in carrying on this school so far; and I am sure you will do the best you can to help him to carry it forward, and to make it one of the permanent institutions of Wakefield.

Mr. COOKE then read the report, which said that on the 14th of October, 1866, he opened the school in a small room in Crown Court, for which he paid 3s. per Sunday. The first morning there was only one boy, but in the afternoon there were thirteen. The Sunday after there were about fourteen in the morning, and twenty-nine in the afternoon, the number gradually increasing. In consequence of the dirty appearance of the children, the inhabitants of Crown Court brought pressure on the gentleman who let the room, and he had to leave on a week's notice. In three weeks he found another room in a suitable place. It was secured on a lease for six years, at a rent of £13 per year, and the work was commenced in it on the first Sunday in February, 1867. The school is capable of accommodating 250 scholars. The number of scholars on the register is 99, with an attendance in the morning of 52; and afternoon, 60. There are 22 teachers. There had been 1,633 dinners given to the scholars on Sunday mornings, which consisted of rice, milk, pea-soup, and potato-hash, and which cost 1d. per head. The poor children had much enjoyed it; and many a mother had thanked God that, although the drunken father had made no provision for a Sunday dinner, the child of the drunkard had been fed. A penny bank had been established, in which £4 2s. 11d. had been deposited by 34 depositors, and £1 14s. 4d. withdrawn. Night-schools had been conducted during the winter months by gentlemen of the town; and books, slates, pens, and ink had been supplied gratuitously. Teachers from every evangelical church in the town had proffered their services; but a larger staff was still needed to work the machinery of the school.